

On Top Of The News Email:news@arubatoday.com website: www.arubatoday.com Tel:+297 582-7800 Tuesday, October 1, 2013

LAST CALL



Janette Dunder of Alexandria, Va., protests outside the Capitol building as Congress continues the budget battle Monday, Sept. 30, 2013, in Washington. President Barack Obama ramped up pressure on Republicans Monday to avoid a post-midnight government shutdown, saying that failure to pass a short-term spending measure to keep agencies operating would "throw a wrench into the gears" of a recovering economy.

(AP Photo/ Evan Vucci)

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. government was on the brink of a partial shutdown Monday after the Democratic-led Senate refused to back down in a clash with the Republican-led House over President Barack Obama's landmark health law. Hours before a midnight

deadline, the Senate voted 54-46 to reject a proposal by House Republicans to work a delay of health care plan into a temporary funding bill. It is now up to the House of Representatives to accept a bill that doesn't delay the health initiative - which it has refused to do - or find an alternative ac-

ceptable to the Senate. Late Monday, Obama called Republican and Democratic congressional leaders but there was no breakthrough in the budget impasse. If it fails to do either of those options, the government faces its first partial shutdown in 17 years. It would

force 800,000 federal workers off the job without pay and rattle the shaky U.S. economic recovery. "We're at the brink," said Sen. Barbara Mikulski, a Democrat, as House Republican leaders calculated their next move. The stock market dropped on fears that political grid-

lock between the White House and the Republican Party would prevail, though analysts suggested significant damage to the national economy was unlikely unless a shutdown lasted more than a few days.

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Venezuela expels top US diplomat, 2 envoys

FABIOLA SANCHEZ

Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela

(AP) — President Nicolas Maduro said Monday that his government was expelling the top U.S. diplomat in Venezuela and two other embassy employees for allegedly conspiring with the political opposition.

Maduro made the announcement during a live TV appearance and said the Americans would have 48 hours to leave the country.

In naming the three diplomats he pronounced clearly the name of Kelly Keiderling, the charge d'affaires and top U.S. diplomat in the country though he did not specify her position. The other two diplomats' names were less clearly enunciated.

Venezuela and the United States have been without ambassadors since 2010, when the late President Hugo Chavez refused to accept a newly named U.S. ambassador.

The U.S. Embassy had not yet been officially informed of the expulsions when Maduro announced them, said Gregory Adams, its acting deputy chief of mission.

"I have asked Foreign Minister Elias Jaua to proceed with their immediate expulsion from the country," Maduro said. "They have 48 hours to leave the country."

"Out of Venezuela," the leftist leader said in Spanish, then added: "Yankees go home," in English. "I don't care what actions the government of Barack

ment to come and bring money and see how basic companies can be halted and see how to take away electricity and shut down all of Venezuela."

against the United States and his political opponents.

Last week, he said he had canceled a planned trip to New York to address the U.N. General Assembly due to an unspecified U.S. plot. The last time Venezuela expelled U.S. diplomats was on March 5, when it ejected two military attaches for allegedly trying to destabilize the nation. That move came several hours before Maduro announced that Chavez had died of cancer.

Chavez governed Venezuela for 14 years, solidifying control of all branches of government as he won solid backing from the poor with generous social spending and blamed the United States for an unsuccessful attempt to overthrow him in 2002.

In recent years, however, the oil-rich country's woes have been compounded by corruption, rampant violent crime, worsening power outages and increasing shortages of food and medicines.

At the same time, Maduro's government has been accused by international human rights and press freedom groups of cracking down on free speech and independent media political activity. Maduro narrowly won election in April over opposition challenger Henrique Capriles, who claims the victory was fraudulent. □



Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro, right, and Foreign Minister Elias Jaua, acknowledge well-wishers from the balcony of the Foreign Ministry in Caracas, Venezuela. Maduro said Monday that his government was expelling the top U.S. diplomat in Venezuela and two other embassy employees for allegedly conspiring with the political opposition.

(AP Photo/Ariana Cubillos)

Obama takes," he said. "We're not going to permit an imperialist govern-

Maduro, like Chavez, has a history of making unsubstantiated accusations

Francis to canonize John XXIII, John Paul II on same day

ELISABETTA POVOLEDO

ALAN COWELL

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VATICAN CITY - Pope Francis on Monday set a date next year to declare the sainthood of two of his most influential predecessors on the same day in what was taken as a gesture designed to promote unity within the Roman Catholic Church.

The two popes - John Paul II and John XXIII - will be canonized April 27, 2014, Francis said during a meeting with cardinals at the Vatican. Some Vatican analysts said the decision

to canonize two popes simultaneously was highly unusual, if not unparalleled. The pope announced in July that he would canonize the two men but did not set a date. Initially, there were indications that the two men, who both have disparate followings among reformers and conservatives within the church, would be canonized later this year.

Both pontiffs achieved considerable international stature: John Paul II for encouraging the fall of communism in his native Poland and across Eastern Europe,

and John XXIII for assembling the liberalizing Second Vatican Council in the 1960s.

Unusually, Francis approved the canonization of John XXIII without a second miracle normally attributed to successful candidates for sainthood.

The process leading to the canonization of John Paul II began almost immediately after his death in 2005. In a preliminary step, he was beatified in May 2011 after a Vatican committee credited him with interceding to cure a French nun, Marie Simon-Pierre Normand, of

Parkinson's disease. John Paul II suffered from the same disease.

The second miracle attributed to John Paul II was said to be the healing of a woman who prayed to the pope on the day of his beatification.

In July, the Vatican spokesman, the Rev. Federico Lombardi, said Francis was eager to canonize John XXIII. "Despite the absence of a second miracle it was the pope's will that the sainthood of the great pope of the Second Vatican Council be recognized," he said. □

Jackson closes Cuba trip without Gross meeting

ANNE GARCIA

Associated Press

HAVANA (AP) — The Rev. Jesse Jackson ended a four-day visit to Cuba on Monday without getting to visit a U.S. government development subcontractor who is serving a 15-year sentence in the Caribbean nation. The civil rights activist said he had requested access to Alan Gross of Maryland, but island authorities told him it couldn't be arranged in time. "I certainly inquired about him. No American can come here in good conscience and not ask about him," Jackson said. "I would hope we would maintain our vigil in trying to gain his release." Gross was arrested in 2009 while importing restricted communications equipment as part of a U.S. government-funded democracy building program. He was accused of spying and convicted of crimes under a statute governing crimes against the state. Gross says he was only setting up Internet networks for island Jewish groups and posed no threat to Cuban sovereignty. Jackson told reporters Monday that Gross had been visited recently by U.S. diplomats. Cuba, for its part, demands the return of four of its agents who are still serving long prison terms in the United States. One of the "Cuban Five" was paroled in 2011 and returned to the island earlier this year. Jackson arrived in Havana on Friday for unrelated talks with emissaries of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, about Kevin Scott Sutay, a former U.S. soldier taken prisoner by the guerrillas as he was hiking through Colombian jungle in June. The FARC asked Jackson for help in arranging a handover, and he agreed. However, Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos subsequently said only the Red Cross would be allowed to secure Sutay's release and warned that there would be no "media spectacle." □

GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

Continued from Front

Ramping up pressure on Republicans to avoid a post-midnight government shutdown, Obama warned such a move would "throw a wrench into the gears" of a recovering economy and hurt hundreds of thousands of government workers.

Some critical services would continue during a shutdown, such as patrolling the borders and controlling air traffic. The State Department would continue processing foreign applications for visas, and embassies and consulates overseas would continue to provide services to American citizens.

As lawmakers squabbled, Obama urged House Republicans to abandon demands he said were designed to "save face after making some impossible promises to the extreme right of their party." Speaking of the health care law that undergoes a major expansion on Tuesday, he said emphatically, "You can't shut it down."

Earlier, the president said he was willing to discuss budget issues with congressional leaders. He added, "The only way to do that is for everybody to sit down in good faith without threatening to harm women and veterans and children with a government shutdown." The prospect of a shutdown contributed to a decline in stock markets around the world. U.S. stocks sank as Wall Street worried the budget fight could lead to something much worse for the economy — a failure to raise the nation's borrowing limit.

Whether or not Congress averts a shutdown, Republicans are sure to move the health care fight to a must-do measure looming in mid-October to increase the borrowing cap. The U.S. risks a market-rattling, first-ever default on its obligations if Congress fails to raise that limit.

Both a shutdown and a default would be politically risky ahead of next year's

congressional elections. Some Republican leaders fear the public will blame their party for a shutdown if they insist on crippling health care reform.

But individual House members may face a greater risk by embracing a compromise.

Since the last government shutdown in 1995-1996, temporary funding bills have been noncontroversial, with neither party willing to chance a shutdown to achieve legislative goals it couldn't otherwise win. But with the 3-year-old health care law nearing implementation, hardcore tea party conservatives are determined to block it.

There are few issues Republicans feel as passionately about as the health care reform, which they have dubbed "Obamacare." They see the plan, intended to provide coverage for the millions of Americans now uninsured, as wasteful and restricting freedom by requiring most Americans to have insurance.

A crucial part of the plan will begin Tuesday, whether or not the government partially closes: enrollment in new health care exchanges for millions of Americans. That's because most of the program is paid from monies not subject to congressional appropriations.

House Republican leaders met in Speaker John Boehner's office to plan their next move. Officials said that even though time was running short, they expected at least one more attempt to squeeze a concession from the White House, likely a demand to force a one-year delay in the requirement for individuals to purchase health coverage or face financial penalties.

Republican unity over their strategy showed unmistakable signs of fraying as the deadline neared. Several Republican senators and House members said they would be willing to vote for straightforward legislation that would keep the government functioning, with no health care-related provisions. □

Netanyahu urges Obama to keep Iran sanctions

JULIE PACE
AP White House Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — Despite soothing assurances from Iran's new leaders, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu implored President Barack Obama on Monday to keep punishing sanctions in place against Tehran — and even tighten them if the Islamic republic advances its nuclear programs while negotiating with the U.S. Netanyahu nevertheless signaled he would not block Obama's efforts to seek a diplomatic resolution to the nuclear impasse, even as he expressed skepticism about the Iranian government

outreach as a "smiley campaign" aimed at buying Tehran more time to pursue a bomb.

Obama, who has long called for a negotiated solution to the Iranian nuclear dispute, said it was important to test the possible diplomatic opening. But he insisted that U.S. officials were "clear-eyed" as they enter talks with the Iranians. "Our hope is that we can resolve this diplomatically," Obama said. "But as president of the United States, as I've said before and I will repeat, that we take no options off the table, including military options."

The president did not offer Netanyahu any public assurances about the future

U.S. counterpart to toughen his threats of military action should Tehran get close to producing a nuclear weapon.

Ahead of his visit to the U.S., Netanyahu made a series of derisive remarks about Rouhani's efforts to woo Obama and vowed to "tell the truth in the face of the sweet talk and the onslaught of smiles."

But the Israeli leader was publicly more subdued while sitting side-by-side with Obama at the White House. He thanked the U.S. president for his efforts to curb the Iranian nuclear program and for calling on Rouhani to back up his words with actions. And in a possible sign of moderation,



President Barack Obama meets with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington, Monday, Sept. 30, 2013. The White House said the two leaders would discuss negotiations with the Palestinians, developments in Syria and Iran.

(AP Photo/Charles Dharapak)

"If diplomacy is to work, those pressures must be kept in place," Netanyahu said of the sanctions during an Oval Office meeting with Obama.

The two men met three days after Obama's historic phone call with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, which marked the first direct conversation between a U.S. and Iranian leader in more than three decades. While the election of Rouhani, a more moderate-sounding cleric, has been viewed optimistically by the Obama administration, Netanyahu has dismissed the new Iranian leader's

of the American sanctions, which have resulted in skyrocketing inflation and unemployment in Iran. But he credited the penalties with pushing Rouhani to seek a nuclear deal in exchange for economic relief.

The sudden prospect of a thaw between the U.S. and Iran has threatened to further strain the often-tense ties between Obama and Netanyahu. While the relationship has improved somewhat in recent months, Netanyahu has long been skeptical of Obama's preference for negotiating with Iran and has repeatedly pressed his

tion, Netanyahu repeatedly said Iran must give up its "military" nuclear program, raising the possibility that Israel might be open to tolerating limited nuclear activities by Iran.

In the past, Netanyahu has said that Iran must halt all enrichment of uranium, a process that can have both military and civilian uses.

Iran has offered to open its nuclear facilities to international inspectors as part of broad negotiations with the United States but insists the nuclear program is its right and is for peaceful purposes only. □

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BP accused of lying to US during Gulf oil spill

MICHAEL KUNZELMAN

Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — BP lied to the U.S. government and withheld information about the amount of oil spilling into the Gulf of Mexico after its well blew out in 2010, attorneys told a judge Monday.

But lawyers for the London-based oil giant denied those accusations and said there was no way to prepare for such a unique blowout a mile below the sea floor. Second-guessing the company's efforts to cap the well was "Monday morning quarterbacking at its worst," BP attorney Mike Brock said during opening statements of the second phase of a trial over the spill.

This part focuses on BP's response to the disaster and is designed help U.S. District Judge Carl Barbier determine much oil spewed into the Gulf.

The government's estimate is some 70 million gallons more than what BP says spilled. Establishing how much oil leaked into the Gulf during BP's struggle to cap the well will help figure out the penalties the oil company must pay. Billions of dollars are at stake.

The first phase of the trial centered on what caused the blowout.

Brian Barr, an attorney for residents and businesses who claim they were hurt by the spill, said BP failed to prepare for a blowout and compounded the problem by misleading federal officials.

BP had a 600-page oil spill response plan that only included one page on "source control." It simply called for assembling a team of experts to devise a way to stop a blowout, Barr said.

"BP's plan was nothing more than a plan to plan," he said.

The April 20, 2010, blowout of BP's Macondo well 50 miles (80 kilometers) off the

Louisiana coast triggered an explosion that killed 11 workers on the Deepwater Horizon drilling rig and spawned the nation's worst offshore oil spill. BP used a capping stack to seal the well on July 15, 2010, after other methods failed.

BP maintains its spill preparations complied with every government requirement and met industry standards. But the blowout presented unforeseen challenges, Brock said. In May 2010, BP tried in vain to use the "top kill" method to stop the flow of oil by

estimated oil was flowing at a rate of 1,000 to 5,000 barrels per day. But the company's adversaries at the trial say BP's own internal documents and emails show an effort to conceal much higher estimates.

"BP's policy of not releasing the flow rate information was enforced at the highest levels of the company," Brian said, pointing to an email that a BP employee sent to BP Exploration and Production CEO Andy Inglis and his assistant on May 15.

The employee, Mike Ma-

day.

The top kill was among several methods that didn't work. Other attempts, such as the Cofferdam and the "top hat," also failed. The terms were obscure industry jargon before the spill but became buzzwords as the company scrambled to find a way to plug the well.

BP insists it was properly prepared to respond to the disaster, but Barr argued the company could have capped the well much sooner if it hadn't ignored decades of warn-



PJ Hahn, Coastal Zone Manager for Plaquemines Parish, examines oil along the shoreline of Bay Jimmy, which was heavily impacted by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, in Plaquemines Parish, La., Friday, Sept. 27, 2013. BP lied to the U.S. government and withheld information about the amount of oil spilling into the Gulf of Mexico after its well blew out in 2010, attorneys told a judge Monday.

(AP Photo/Gerald Herbert)

pumping mud and other material into the blowout preventer. Plaintiffs' lawyers claim BP knew the strategy was doomed to fail based on higher flow rate estimates that the company didn't share with federal officials at the time. "Nevertheless, BP pressed ahead and falsely claimed that it was a slam dunk," said Brad Brian, an attorney for rig owner Transocean.

A week after the spill started, high-ranking BP official Doug Suttles told Coast Guard Rear Adm. Mary Landry that the company

son, warned them that they should be "very cautious" standing behind the lower estimate because his team's models showed estimates that were up to 20 times higher.

Mason said he was called in for a meeting the following day with Inglis' assistant, who suggested he shouldn't have put his warning in writing. When Mason asked what the problem was, the assistant replied, "It's the big number," Mason recalled in videotaped testimony that was shown in court Mon-

ings about the risks of a deep-water blowout.

"BP refused to spend any time or money preparing to stop a deep-water blowout at its source," he said.

BP used a capping stacking to finally stop the gusher on July 15, 2010. Brock rejected the notion that BP could have stopped the spill much sooner if it had a pre-built capping stack on hand. Nobody in the industry had used such a device before, he added.

"It was a unique situation," he said. "It was a unique blowout." □

Delta picks Microsoft for pilot tablets

JOSHUA FREED

AP Airlines Writer

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Delta Air Lines plans to buy 11,000 Microsoft Surface 2 tablets for its pilots to replace the heavy bundles of books and maps they haul around now.

Other airlines, including American and United, have been buying Apple's iPad for that purpose.

Delta says the Surface tablets will save it \$13 million per year in fuel and other costs. Right now, each pilot carries a 38-pound flight bag with manuals and maps. Delta plans to test the tablets on its Boeing 757s and 767s, which are flown by the same group of pilots. The airline is hoping for Federal Aviation Administration approval next year to use the tablets throughout a flight, and it hopes to be using the devices on all of its other planes by the end of next year. One reason Delta picked a Microsoft device was that it's easier to give pilots separate sections for company and personal use, said Steve Dickson, Delta's senior vice president for flight operations.

Pilots will be able to install personal software and keep their own items such as photos on the personal section of the devices, while another portion will be dedicated to Delta's software, Dickson said.

"We trust them to manage that side of the device," Dickson said.

Another reason for picking the Surface tablet is that Delta's training software also runs on the same Windows operating system as the tablets, reducing the need to redo that software for another device, Dickson said. Delta has already done a test program where pilots could bring their own devices, including iPads. □

Justice Dept suing North Carolina over voter law

PETE YOST

Associated Press

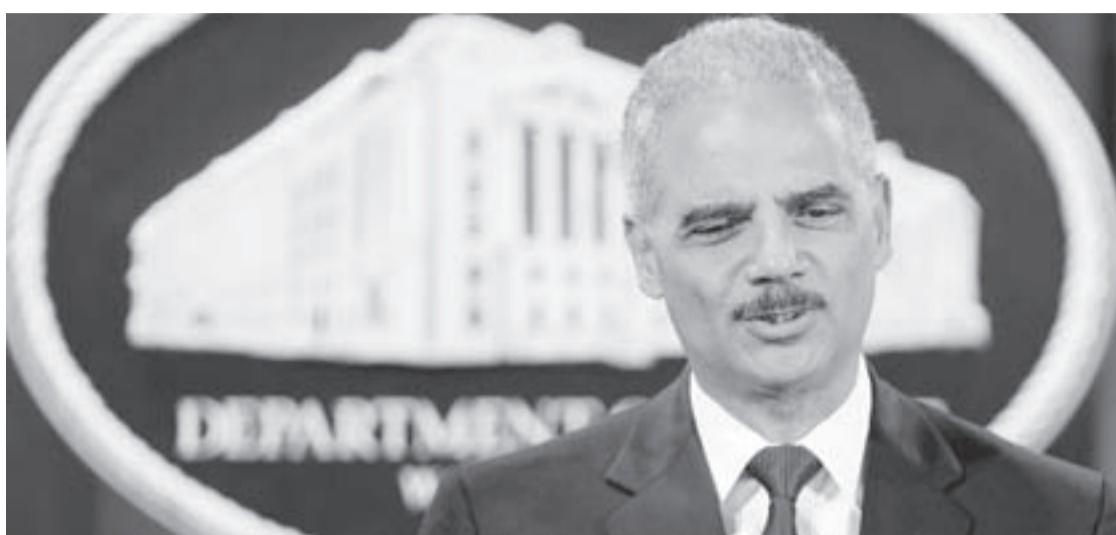
WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. Justice Department is suing the state of North Carolina for alleged racial discrimination over its tough new voting rules, Attorney General Eric Holder announced Monday.

The lawsuit is the latest effort by the Obama administration to counter a Supreme Court decision that struck down the most powerful part of the landmark Voting Rights Act and freed states, many of them in the South, from strict federal oversight of their elections. "By restricting access and ease of voter participation, this new law would shrink, rather than expand, access" to voting, Holder said at a news conference. "Allowing limits on voting rights that disproportionately exclude minority vot-

ers would be inconsistent with our ideals as a nation." North Carolina has a new law that scales back the

adopting stricter voter ID and other election laws. The Justice Department on Aug. 22 sued Texas over

crimatory. Republican lawmakers in southern states insist the new measures are need-



Attorney General Eric Holder speaks during a news conference at the Justice Department in Washington, Monday, Sept. 30, 2013, announcing a new action to protect voting rights.

(AP Photo/Manuel Balce Ceneta)

period for early voting and imposes stringent voter identification requirements. It is among at least five Southern states

the state's voter ID law and is seeking to intervene in a lawsuit over redistricting laws in Texas that minority groups consider to be dis-

ed to prevent voter fraud, though such crimes are infrequent. Democrats and civil rights groups argue the tough new laws are

intended to make voting more difficult for minorities and students, voting groups that lean toward Democrats, in states with legacies of poll taxes and literacy tests.

The North Carolina lawsuit challenges the state law's elimination of the first seven days of early voting opportunities and its elimination of same-day voter registration during the early voting period. Same-day registration allows voters to cast a ballot immediately after presenting election officials with proof of their name and home address. The Justice Department challenge also is aimed at a provision eliminating the counting of certain types of provisional ballots by voters who cast ballots in their home counties but do not vote in the correct precincts. □

Life for chemist convicted of poisoning husband

DAVID PORTER

Associated Press

NEW BRUNSWICK, New Jersey (AP) — A Chinese-born chemist who worked for a decade for one of America's biggest pharmaceutical companies was a cold, calculating murderer who poisoned her husband rather than let him divorce her, a judge said Monday as he sentenced her to life in prison. Tianle Li won't be eligible for parole for more than 62 years for the killing of Xiaoye Wang, a computer software engineer, in early 2011, the judge said. "This was planned, calculated and committed in a cruel and depraved manner," state Superior Court Judge Michael Toto said. The 43-year-old Li was convicted in July of murder and hindering apprehension. Her attorney had sought a

30-year sentence. Li continues to deny any role in her husband's death, said her attorney, Steven Altman. In a brief, tear-filled statement read in court Monday, Li said she prays for her husband's soul and will appeal the verdict. The couple has a son who is 4 and in the care of relatives. Li worked for New York City-based biopharmaceutical company Bristol-Myers Squibb. Prosecutors introduced evidence during the trial that she ordered thallium, a tasteless, odorless poison, through work in 2010 after researching its effects on humans. Thallium has been banned for consumer use in the U.S. since 1972. It can be fatal in doses as small as a gram and has been called the perfect poison because it's difficult to detect in lab

tests. It was initially suspected to be the toxin used in the 2006 fatal poisoning in London of former Russian KGB agent Alexander Lit-

vinenko, but it was later determined he had ingested the rare radioactive isotope polonium-210. Wang, 39, checked into a

hospital in January 2011 suffering from what appeared to be the flu or some other virus. He lapsed into a coma and died. □

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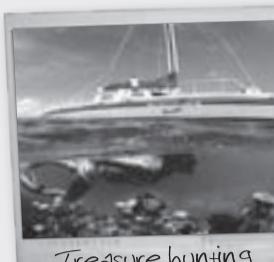
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Report: Al-Qaida plot leak has undermined U.S. intelligence

ERIC SCHMITT

MICHAEL S. SCHMIDT

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WASHINGTON - As the nation's spy agencies assess the fallout from disclosures about their surveillance programs, some government analysts and senior officials have made a startling finding: The impact of a leaked terrorist plot by al-Qaida in August has caused more immediate damage to U.S. counterterrorism efforts than the thousands of classified documents disclosed by Edward J. Snowden, the former National Security Agency contractor.

Since news reports in early August revealed that the United States intercepted messages between Ayman al-Zawahri, who succeeded Osama bin Laden as the head of al-Qaida, and Nasser al-Wuhayshi, the head of the Yemen-based al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, discussing an imminent terrorist attack, analysts have detected a sharp drop in the terrorists' use of a major communications channel that authorities were monitoring. Since August, senior U.S. officials have been scrambling to find new ways to tap into the electronic messages and conversations of al-Qaida's leaders and operatives.

"The switches weren't turned off but there has been a real decrease in quality" of communications, said one U.S. official, who like others quoted spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss intelligence programs.

The drop in message traffic after the communication intercepts contrasts with what analysts describe as a far more muted impact on counterterrorism efforts from the disclosures by Snowden of the broad

capabilities of NSA surveillance programs.

Instead of terrorists moving away from electronic communications after those disclosures, analysts have detected terrorists mainly talking about the information that Snowden has disclosed.

Senior U.S. officials say that Snowden's disclosures have had a broader impact on

The communication intercepts between al-Zawahri and Wuhayshi revealed what U.S. intelligence officials and lawmakers have described as one of the most serious plots against American and other Western interests since the attacks on Sept. 11, 2001. It prompted the closure of 19 U.S. Embassies and consulates for a week, when

The Times' publishing the same information, and the newspaper did so on Aug. 5.

U.S. counterterrorism officials say they believe the disclosure about the al-Qaida plot has had a significant impact because it was a specific event that signaled to terrorists that a main communication network that the group's lead-

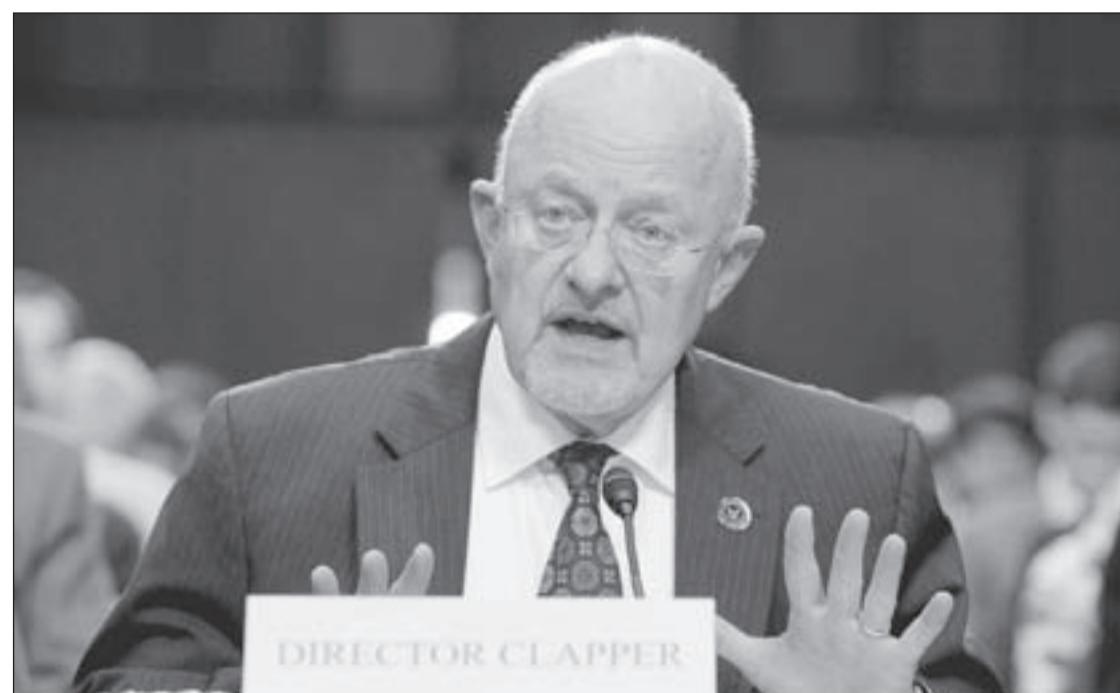
the al-Qaida leaders. "The Snowden stuff is layered and layered, and it will take a lot of time to understand it. There wasn't a sudden drop-off from it. A lot of these guys think that they are not impacted by it, and it is difficult stuff for them to understand."

Other senior intelligence and counterterrorism officials offer a dissenting view, saying it is difficult, if not impossible, to separate the impact of the messages between the al-Qaida leaders from Snowden's overall disclosures, and that the decline is more likely a combination of the two.

"The bad guys are just not going to talk operational planning electronically," said one senior counterterrorism official.

Over the past decade, the NSA has invested billions of dollars in a clandestine campaign to preserve its ability to eavesdrop. The agency has circumvented or cracked much of the encryption, or digital scrambling, that guards global commerce and banking systems, protects sensitive data like trade secrets and medical records, and automatically secures the emails, Web searches, Internet chats and phone calls of Americans and others around the world, according to documents provided by Snowden.

The government's greatest fear concerning its counterterrorism operations is that over the next several months, the level of intercepted communications will continue to fall as terrorists most likely find new ways to communicate with one another, one senior U.S. official said. It will likely take the government some time to break into that method and monitor communications. □



Director of National Intelligence James Clapper testifies on Capitol Hill in Washington before the Senate Intelligence Committee hearing on National Security Agency (NSA) call records. As the nation's spy agencies assess the fallout from disclosures about their surveillance programs, some senior officials have suggested the impact of a leaked terrorist plot by al-Qaida in August has caused more immediate damage to U.S. counterterrorism efforts than the thousands of classified documents disclosed by Edward J. Snowden, the former National Security Agency contractor.

(AP Photo/Carolyn Kaster)

national security in general, including counterterrorism efforts. This includes fears that Russia and China now have more technical details about the NSA surveillance programs.

Diplomatic ties have also been damaged, and among the results was the decision by Brazil's president, Dilma Rousseff, to postpone a state visit to the United States in protest over revelations that the agency spied on her, her top aides and Brazil's largest company, the oil giant Petrobras.

the authorities ultimately concluded that the plot focused on the embassy in Yemen.

McClatchy Newspapers first reported on the conversations between al-Zawahri and Wuhayshi on Aug. 4. Two days before that, The New York Times agreed to withhold the identities of the al-Qaida leaders after senior U.S. intelligence officials said the information could jeopardize their operations. After the government became aware of the McClatchy article, it dropped its objections to

ers were using was being monitored. The sharpest decline in messaging has been among the al-Qaida operatives in Yemen, officials said.

The disclosures from Snowden have not had such specificity about terrorist communications networks that the government is monitoring, they said.

"It was something that was immediate, direct and involved specific people on specific communications about specific events," one senior U.S. official said of the exchange between

U.S. airlines now promising a return to civility, for a fee

SCOTT MAYEROWITZ

AP Airlines Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — U.S. airlines are introducing a new bevy of fees, but this time passengers might actually like them.

Unlike the first generation of charges which dinged fliers for once-free services like checking a bag, these new fees promise a taste of the good life, or at least a more civil flight.

Extra legroom, early boarding and access to quiet lounges were just the beginning. Airlines are now renting Apple iPads preloaded with movies, selling hot first class meals in coach and letting passengers pay to have an empty seat next to them. Once on the ground, they can skip baggage claim, having their luggage delivered directly to their home or office. In the near future, airlines plan to go one step further, using massive amounts of personal data to customize new offers for each flier.

"We've moved from takeaways to enhancements," says John F. Thomas of L.E.K. Consulting. "It's all about

personalizing the travel experience."

Carriers have struggled to raise airfares enough to cover costs. Fees bring in more than \$15 billion a year and are the reason the airlines are profitable. But the amount of money coming in from older charges like baggage and reservation change fees has plateaued. So the airlines are selling new extras and copying marketing methods honed by retailers.

Technological upgrades allow airlines to sell products directly to passengers at booking, in follow-up emails as trips approach, at check-in and on mobile phones minutes before boarding. Delta Air Lines recently gave its flight attendants wireless devices, allowing them to sell passengers last-second upgrades to seats with more legroom. And just like Amazon.com offers suggested readings based on each buyer's past purchases, airlines soon will be able to use past behavior to target fliers.

"We have massive amounts of data," says Delta CEO

Richard Anderson. "We know who you are. We know what your history has been on the airline. We can customize our offerings."

Other airlines are experimenting with tracking

discounted day pass to the airline's lounge on their phone.

Airlines have yet to find the right balance between being helpful and being creepy. So, for now, most



Delta Air Lines passengers, who have purchased an upgrade to board their flight early, take advantage of priority boarding as they make their way to their flight at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport in Atlanta. Airlines are introducing a new bevy of fees, but this time passengers might actually like them. Unlike the first generation of charges which dinged fliers for once-free services like checking a bag, these new fees promise a taste of the good life, or at least a more civil flight. In the near future, airlines plan to go one step further, using massive amounts of personal data to customize new offers for each flier.

(AP Photo/John Amis)

passengers throughout the airport. In the future, if somebody clears security hours before their flight, they might be offered a

of the data is being used to win back passengers after their flight is delayed or luggage is lost.

"We want to get back to

a point where people feel like travel isn't something to endure, but something they can enjoy," says Bob Kupbens, Delta's current vice president of marketing and digital commerce.

Most passengers select flights based on the lowest base fare. The online travel industry plays up that price sensitivity with sites named CheapOair.com, CheapTickets.com and InsanelyCheapFlights.com.

When airlines try to raise fares, they are met with resistance. "Customers are very quick to either change travel plans, or use another carrier or not travel at all," says Jim Corridore, an airline analyst with Standard & Poor's Capital IQ.

In the past three years, airlines have tried to hike fares 48 times, according to FareCompare.com. During 29 of those attempts, bookings fell enough that airlines abandoned the increase.

Airlines are also starting to bundle items. Passengers purchase items they might not necessarily buy alone; it also simplifies the dizzying array of offers. □

American Airlines to hire 1,500 pilots

FORT WORTH, Texas (AP) — American Airlines says it will hire 1,500 new pilots over the next five years and offer jobs to the remaining pilots who are still furloughed. American said Monday that it would begin posting the new jobs this week and hire 45 to 50 pilots per month through next summer. It has already started hiring 1,500 flight attendants.

Parent AMR Corp. is trying to merge with US Airways Group Inc. and exit from bankruptcy protection. The merger is being held up by an antitrust lawsuit filed by the U.S. Department of Justice. A trial is set to begin Nov. 25.

AMR CEO Tom Horton said in a letter to employees that the company was preparing for the trial but would "remain open to discussions with the Justice Department regarding a settlement on appropriate terms."

Airlines have resumed hiring pilots in part because a large number are hitting a new mandatory retirement age of 65; it was raised from age 60 a little over five years ago.

Also, new federal rules on crew rest could create the need for more pilots. American is hiring flight attendants partly to replace employees who took severance payments to leave last year.

Also Monday, AMR said in a filing with the bankruptcy court that it earned \$71 million in August, a reversal from a loss of \$82 million a year earlier. Revenue rose 7 percent to \$2.34 billion.

Horton said that AMR could make a profit-sharing payment to employees next March — it would be the first in several years.

"We are building a strong, competitive and profitable new American which will create more opportunity for our people," he said. □

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Court in Knox trial allows new DNA test

COLLEEN BARRY
Associated Press

FLORENCE, Italy (AP) — The Florence appellate court hearing U.S. student Amanda Knox's third trial in her roommate's murder agreed Monday to run additional DNA tests on the presumed weapon, but rejected more than a dozen other defense requests for new testimony or evidence. On the trial's opening day, presiding Judge Alessandro Nencini said the court agreed to test one DNA trace not previously examined on the knife that prosecutors allege killed British student Meredith Kercher; the trace had previously been deemed too small to test.

Italy's highest court in March ordered a new trial for Knox and her Italian co-defendant, ex-boyfriend Raffaele Sollecito, after overturning their acquittals in Kercher's November 2007 killing. The Court of Cassation blasted the 2011 appeals court acquittal, saying it was full of "deficiencies, contradictions and illogical" conclusions. Knox, now a 26-year-old University of Washington student in Seattle, has not returned to Italy for the current trial, nor is she compelled by law to do so. Sollecito, now 29, likewise did not attend the trial, as is permitted in Italy.

Kercher's body was found in a pool of blood, her throat slashed, in the house she shared with Knox in Perugia, a central Italian town popular with foreign exchange students. Suspicion fell on Knox and Sollecito, who had been dating for less than a week, due to their conflicting stories

and what some viewed as strange behavior by Knox. A third man, Rudy Guede, was convicted in the slaying and is serving a 16-year term.

That court found that Guede had not acted alone.

On Monday, Knox defense lawyer Carlo Dalla Vedova

hear testimony from a jailed mobster, Luciano Aviello, who had accused his brother in the murder in a jailhouse discussion with Sollecito.

Aviello, whose criminal convictions include defamation, is to testify Friday. The court also accepted into evidence defense photo-



Kercher family lawyer Francesco Maresca talks to reporters as he arrives for the start of U.S. student Amanda Knox's second appeals trial in her British roommate's murder, in Florence, Italy, Monday, Sept. 30, 2013. Italy's highest court ordered a new trial for Knox and her former Italian boyfriend, overturning their acquittals in the gruesome 2007 slaying of Meredith Kercher with a harsh assessment of an appeals court acquittal in 2011. The Court of Cassation said the acquittal was full of "deficiencies, contradictions and illogical" conclusions.

(AP Photo/Francesco Bellini)

warned of a risk of an "infinite trial," since the charge of murder has no statute of limitations.

The Florence court agreed to only three requests, a sign that it will apply its own interpretation to reams of evidence and testimony already submitted in the previous lower court conviction and appellate court acquittal.

Besides a new DNA test on the knife found in Sollecito's kitchen, the court also agreed to the prosecution's request to again

test showing Sollecito's fingernails bitten down at the time of his arrest, which the defense argues is proof he didn't participate in what prosecutors allege was a drug-fueled sex game that turned murderous.

Kercher family lawyer Francesco Maresca ridiculed the notion that the bitten-down nails were evidence that Sollecito could not have undone a bra clasp that had a trace of his DNA. "I hold it with the fingertips without using my nails," he said. □

Paris prosecutor probing fortune of Assad's uncle

SARAH DiLORENZO
Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — The Paris prosecutor's office opened an investigation Monday into the real estate holdings of Syrian President Bashar Assad's uncle after watchdogs accused him of corruption. Transparency International and the French anti-corruption group Sherpa filed a complaint earlier this month, alleging that Rifaat Assad is worth several million euros and that the sum is far beyond what he earned as a Syrian military commander or as the country's vice president. The complaint alleges that this fortune, including several dozen Paris apartments and a luxurious townhouse, must have been built by stealing from Syrian public funds and by abusing his power.

The groups argued that France shouldn't serve as a refuge for ill-gotten gains and called for Rifaat Assad's assets to be frozen so they can't be hidden abroad. Prosecutor's office spokeswoman Agnes Thibault-Lecuire said a preliminary investigation was opened Monday but that no assets had been frozen. The first step, she said, is to inventory the fortune. Even that might be a difficult task, given Sherpa and Transparency International's claim that much of his holdings are registered under other people's names.

In a 2011 interview, Rifaat Assad told The Associated Press that he had lost all his money in the stock market and lived off the largesse of

his 16 children. His son Siwar said at the time that the holdings mostly included real estate but also two TV networks, hotels and a restaurant in Syria.

Siwar told the AP on Monday that his father wasn't worried about the allegations because he was too busy with his work organizing one faction of Syria's opposition. Siwar cast doubt on the allegations, saying that the watchdog groups were just seeking attention, and that his father had filed suit against them alleging false and slanderous denunciations.

"The origin (of the fortune) is completely legal," he said.

Rifaat Assad fled into exile after a failed 1984 coup attempt against his brother, then-President Hafez Assad, and lives mostly in France, which awarded him the Legion of Honor. He tried to take power again in Syria in 2000, when his brother died, but the ruling party closed ranks around Bashar, whose forces are now fighting a civil war with a fractured opposition. Bashar Assad has been accused of using chemical weapons against civilians and unleashing his military's might against entire towns and cities.

Rifaat Assad leads one of the groups organized against Bashar and has put himself forward as a possible transition leader.

But he, too, has a reputation as a strongman. Human rights groups say Rifaat led crack army units in an assault that crushed a 1982 uprising in Hama, Syria. □



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Wave of bombings tear through Baghdad, 55 dead

SINAN SALAHEDDIN

Associated Press

BAGHDAD (AP) — A new wave of bombs tore through Baghdad on Monday, officials said, killing at least 55 people. Most of the blasts were car bombs detonated in Shiite neighborhoods, the latest of a series of well-coordinated attacks blamed on hard-line Sunni insurgents determined to rekindle large-scale sectarian conflict. Multiple coordinated bombing strikes have hit Baghdad repeatedly over the last five months. The Shiite-led government has announced new security measures, conducted counter-insurgency sweeps of areas believed to hold insurgent hideouts, and sponsored political

reconciliation talks, but has not significantly slowed the pace of the bombing campaign.

No group immediately claimed responsibility for the bombings, but they bore the hallmarks of al-Qaida's local branch in Iraq, known as the Islamic State of Iraq.

Al-Qaida is believed to be trying to build on the Sunni minority's discontent toward what they consider to be second-class treatment by the government and on infighting between political groups.

In addition to helping al-Qaida gain recruits, the political crisis may also be affecting the security forces' ability to get intelligence from Sunni communities.

"Our war with terrorism

goes on," Interior Ministry spokesman Saad Maan told The Associated Press. "Part of the problem is the political infighting and re-

gional conflicts ... There are shortcomings and we need to develop our capabilities mainly in the intelligence-gathering efforts."



Citizens inspect the site of a car bomb attack in Baghdad, Iraq, Monday, Sept. 30, 2013. A wave of deadly car bombs struck Shiite neighborhoods in the Iraqi capital on Monday morning, officials said, the latest in relentless violence roiling the country in recent months.

(AP Photo/Khalid Mohammed)

The deadliest of Monday's bombings was in the eastern Sadr City district, where a parked car bomb tore through a small vegetable market and its parking lot, killing seven people and wounding 16, a police officer said.

And in the evening, a roadside bomb outside a Sunni mosque within a refinery compound in the south Baghdad district of Dora killed four and wounded 14.

Some such attacks on Sunni targets are blamed on hard-line militants targeting rival Sunnis, but there are also indications that Shiite groups have started to retaliate, raising fears of a return to the widespread sectarian killing of 2006-2007. □

Al-Qaida gunmen overrun major Yemen military base

AHMED AL-HAJ

Associated Press

SANA'A, Yemen (AP) — Suspected al-Qaida gunmen dressed in fatigues and riding in military trucks overran a key army base in eastern Yemen on Monday, security officials said, holding captive high-ranking officers and soldiers inside in the latest bold attack by militants there.

Security officials said the base in the large but sparsely populated province of Hadramawt is supposed to be protected by several checkpoints leading to its main gate, but that no security was posted outside the military compound when the attack took place.

The military sent in reinforcements and troops are now surrounding the compound, intermittently clashing with the attackers, the officials and a Defense Ministry statement said. The Ministry said it has man-

aged to evacuate the building but other security officials say there are still an unknown number of officers and soldiers inside.

The attack underscores al-Qaida's ability to exploit security lapses in Yemen, despite a dramatic rise in the number of U.S. drone strikes on militants there — including in Hadramawt — since President Barack Obama took office.

The group was blamed for an assault earlier this month that killed 38 soldiers in the nearby province of Shabwa.

In the Monday attack, authorities believe at least 15 militants stormed into the base on the eastern outskirts of the city of Mukalla. The Defense Ministry statement said the militants rode in on two military vehicles, one of which was a car bomb that blasted through the main gate of the compound. □

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Italian government sees hope of survival amid turmoil

DAVID McHUGH

FRANCES D'EMILIO

Associated Press

ROME (AP) — The Italian government's chances of survival rose on Monday as some of former Premier Silvio Berlusconi's longtime loyalists vowed they would not support his attempt to bring down the fragile coalition. Berlusconi demanded last weekend that the five ministers from his political party quit Premier Enrico Letta's government. He asked them to resign in a show of solidarity ahead of a Senate vote to strip him of his seat because of his tax-fraud conviction.

The ministers, some of them reluctantly, bowed to Berlusconi's demand, plunging the country into



Italian former Premier Silvio Berlusconi arrives at the Lower Chamber, in Rome, Monday, Sept. 30, 2013.

(AP Photo/M. Scrobogna)

political uncertainty. Letta called a confidence vote in Parliament for Wednesday to determine the five-

month-old administration's future.

The prospect of the government collapsing worried investors, who sold off the country's stocks and bonds early Monday. There are fears the country would suffer weeks or months of political uncertainty that could derail its attempts to get the economy back on track. Memories are still fresh of this year's inconclusive elections, which left politicians squabbling for two months before Letta's unusual left-right coalition was cobbled together in April. Letta wants to press ahead with reforms needed to bring the economy, the eurozone's third-largest, out of recession and reduce public debt, which

is forecast to near 130 percent of GDP this year.

An unstable Italian economy could, some argued, revive the European financial crisis, which had lain dormant for months.

But such fears eased somewhat as a split emerged in Berlusconi's party over whether to pull the plug on the government.

At least four of the ministers who quit have said they are considering giving their support to Letta in Parliament. There were also signs of a challenge to Berlusconi's leadership from his political heir, Interior Minister Angelino Alfano. Alfano was reportedly worried about the political repercussions—for himself and the Freedom People party—of bringing

down the government in the middle of a recession for no better reason than to defend Berlusconi in his personal judicial woes. Dissent among Berlusconi's aides also was fueled by a decision by many senators in Berlusconi's party to quit in protest if a Senate committee later this week votes to strip him of his seat because of his conviction. "I have expressed strong opposition to our lawmakers' decision to resign," said just-resigned Reforms Minister Gaetano Quagliariello, a longtime Berlusconi stalwart who appeared to be shaping up to be the leader of an influential, disenchanted faction in the media mogul's leadership ranks. □

Greek PM vows to eradicate far-right Golden Dawn

EDITH M. LEDERER

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP)—Greece's prime minister said Monday his government will do "whatever it takes"

to completely eradicate the extreme-right Golden Dawn party, whose neo-Nazi leaders have just been arrested.

Antonis Samaras said the

Greek people "are very smart" and are now seeing the party for what it really is. "I believe that they will realize that they should not follow the party that has such

extreme ideological positions and ideas," he told a meeting in New York of AJC, the American Jewish Committee, which advocates globally on Jewish issues.

Samaras, in New York to attend the U.N. annual meeting of world leaders, added that he does not believe the party will return with greater popularity because its leaders will be viewed as victims or martyrs. Golden Dawn's approach and thinking about politics is "so negative" and "so hideous ... (and) so catastrophic to Greeks and Greece that I do not believe they might come back," he said.

Golden Dawn, a formerly fringe nationalist group with neo-Nazi roots that started in the late 1980s, enjoyed a meteoric rise in popularity during Greece's financial crisis which began about six years ago. They won 18 seats in the

300-member Parliament in the 2012 election.

Since the election, Golden Dawn has been blamed for numerous violent attacks, mostly against dark-skinned immigrants but also against gays and left-wing activists.

The party has been increasingly on the defensive since the Sept. 17 fatal stabbing of a left-wing Greek activist rapper, blamed on a Golden Dawn supporter. Though the party has vehemently denied any role in the killing, it has appeared to dent its appeal among Greeks and apparently sparked the current government crackdown.

Several of the 100 invited guests at Samaras' speech expressed concern at Golden Dawn's anti-Semitic and fierce anti-immigrant stance, and the crowd loudly applauded his pledge to crack down on the party. □

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Weapons experts kick off complex Syria mission

ALBERT AJI

ZEINA KARAM

Associated Press

DAMASCUS, Syria (AP) —

Inspectors charged with the enormous task of overseeing the destruction of Syria's deadly chemical weapons stockpiles kicked off their mission Monday, racing to meet tight deadlines against the backdrop of civil war.

The Syrian regime lashed out at the rebels, claiming government forces are fighting mostly al-Qaida-linked militants and refusing to talk with the main Western-backed opposition group — a blow to U.S.-Russian efforts to hold a peace conference by November.

New splits within the opposition group, the Syrian National Coalition, also emerged on the conditions for attending the planned conference in Geneva. After meetings with U.S. officials in New York last

week, the group's leader expressed readiness to attend talks aimed at establishing a transitional gov-

stay on.

But other coalition members expressed astonishment, saying they would



The convoy of a U.N. team of weapons inspectors, who concluded its almost week-long mission in Syria, arrive at Rafik Hariri international airport in Beirut, Lebanon, Monday, Sept. 30, 2013. The inquiry determined that the nerve agent sarin was used in the Aug. 21 attack on a Damascus suburb in Syria, but it did not assess who was behind it.

(AP Photo/Bilal Hussein)

ernment with full executive powers, leaving open the question of whether President Bashar Assad could

participate only if they have prior guarantees that Assad would step down.

"Geneva should be the

road toward salvation and not the road to rescue Assad and his gang," said Mohammad Sarmini, a Turkey-based coalition member.

All previous efforts at bringing the warring sides together for talks have failed, and it was unclear why the regime would come to the table now that it has the upper hand in the war and the threat of an imminent U.S. military strike has been lifted.

The Russian initiative that averted the strike led to the adoption of a U.N. Security Council resolution to have Syria dismantle its estimated 1,000-ton chemical arsenal by mid-2014. The resolution, passed after two weeks of negotiations, marked a breakthrough in diplomatic efforts since the Syrian uprising began in March 2011.

On Monday, 20 inspectors from the Netherlands-based Organization for the

Prohibition of Chemical Weapons landed in Beirut on a private jet on their way to Syria.

The group is to travel to Damascus on Tuesday to begin its ambitious task — a complex and potentially explosive mission fraught with security challenges. They are expected to meet with Syrian Foreign Ministry officials on arrival.

Inspectors at The Hague said Sunday the inspectors' priority is to achieve the first milestone of helping the country scrap its ability to manufacture chemical weapons by a Nov. 1 deadline, using every means possible.

That may include smashing mixing equipment with sledgehammers, blowing up delivery missiles, driving tanks over empty shells or filling them with concrete, and running machines without lubricant so they seize up and become inoperable. □



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Global study: World not ready for aging population

KRISTEN GELINEAU

Associated Press

The world is aging so fast that most countries are not prepared to support their swelling numbers of elderly people, according to a global study going out Tuesday by the United Nations and an elder rights group.

The report ranks the social and economic well-being of elders in 91 countries, with Sweden coming out on top and Afghanistan at the bottom. It reflects what advocates for the old have been warning, with increasing urgency, for years: Nations are simply not working quickly enough to cope with a population graying faster than ever before. By the year 2050, for the first time in history, seniors over the age of 60 will outnumber children under the age of 15.

Truong Tien Thao, who runs a small tea shop on the sidewalk near his home in Hanoi, Vietnam, is 65 and acutely aware that he, like millions of others, is plunging into old age without a safety net. He wishes he could retire, but he and his 61-year-old wife depend on the \$50 a month they earn from the tea shop. And so every day, Thao rises early to open the stall at 6 a.m. and works until 2 p.m., when his wife takes over until closing.

"People at my age should have a rest, but I still have to work to make our ends meet," he says, while waiting for customers at the shop, which sells green tea, cigarettes and chewing gum. "My wife and I have no pension, no health insurance. I'm scared of thinking of being sick — I don't know how I can pay for the medical care."

Thao's story reflects a key point in the report, which was released early to The Associated Press: Aging is an issue across the world. Perhaps surprisingly, the report shows that the fastest aging countries are developing ones, such as Jordan, Laos, Mongolia, Nicaragua and Vietnam, where the number of older people will more than triple

by 2050. All ranked in the bottom half of the index.

The Global AgeWatch Index (www.globalagewatch.org) was created by elder advocacy group HelpAge International and the U.N. Population Fund in part to address a lack of international data on the extent and impact of global aging. The index, released on the U.N.'s International Day of Older Persons, compiles data from the U.N., World Health Organization, World Bank and other global agencies, and analyzes income, health, education, employment and age-friendly environment in each country.

The index was welcomed

increasingly complex picture of aging and what it means to the world. On the one hand, the fact that people are living longer is a testament to advances in health care and nutrition, and advocates emphasize that the elderly should be seen not as a burden but as a resource. On the other, many countries still lack a basic social protection floor that provides income, health care and housing for their senior citizens.

Afghanistan, for example, offers no pension to those not in the government. Life expectancy is 59 years for men and 61 for women, compared to a global average of 68 for men and 72

Although government hospitals are free, Wasay complains that they provide little treatment and hardly any medicine. He wants to stop working in three years, but is not sure his children can support him. He says many older people cannot find work because they are not strong enough to do day labor, and some resort to begging.

"You have to keep working no matter how old you are — no one is rich enough to stop," he says. "Life is very difficult."

Many governments have resisted tackling the issue partly because it is viewed as hugely complicated, negative and costly —



Elderly men sit in a stairwell of a subway station in Taipei, Taiwan, Monday, Sept. 30, 2013. According to its cabinet-level Council for Economic Planning and Development (CEPD), Taiwan faces an accelerated aging population and declining fertility rate. In more than four years, the elderly population will outnumber the juvenile population, meaning the population over 65 will be about four times the population under 14. (Associated Press)

by elder rights advocates, who have long complained that a lack of data has thwarted their attempts to raise the issue on government agendas.

"Unless you measure something, it doesn't really exist in the minds of decision-makers," said John Beard, Director of Ageing and Life Course for the World Health Organization. "One of the challenges for population aging is that we don't even collect the data, let alone start to analyze it. ... For example, we've been talking about how people are living longer, but I can't tell you people are living longer and sicker, or longer in good health."

The report fits into an in-

for women, according to U.N. data.

That leaves Abdul Wasay struggling to survive. At 75, the former cook and blacksmith spends most of his day trying to sell toothbrushes and toothpaste on a busy street corner in Kabul's main market. The job nets him just \$6 a day — barely enough to support his wife. He can only afford to buy meat twice a month; the family relies mainly on potatoes and curried vegetables.

"It's difficult because my knees are weak and I can't really stand for a long time," he says. "But what can I do? It's even harder in winter, but I can't afford treatment."

which is not necessarily true, says Silvia Stefanoni, chief executive of HelpAge International. Japan and Germany, she says, have among the highest proportions of elders in the world, but also boast steady economies.

"There's no evidence that an aging population is a population that is economically damaged," she says. Prosperity in itself does not guarantee protection for the old. The world's rising economic powers — the so-called BRICS nations of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa — rank lower in the index than some poorer countries such as Uruguay and Panama. □

EU inflation falls to lowest level since Feb. 2010

PAN PYLAS

Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Inflation across the 17 countries that use the euro fell further below target in September, official figures showed Monday, news that could encourage the European Central Bank to cut interest rates again if the recovery across the eurozone stalls. Eurostat, the EU's statistics office, said consumer prices were up 1.1 percent in the year to September, down from the 1.3 percent rate recorded the previous month. September's rate was also the lowest since February 2010 and below expectations — the consensus in the markets was for a more modest decline to 1.2 percent.

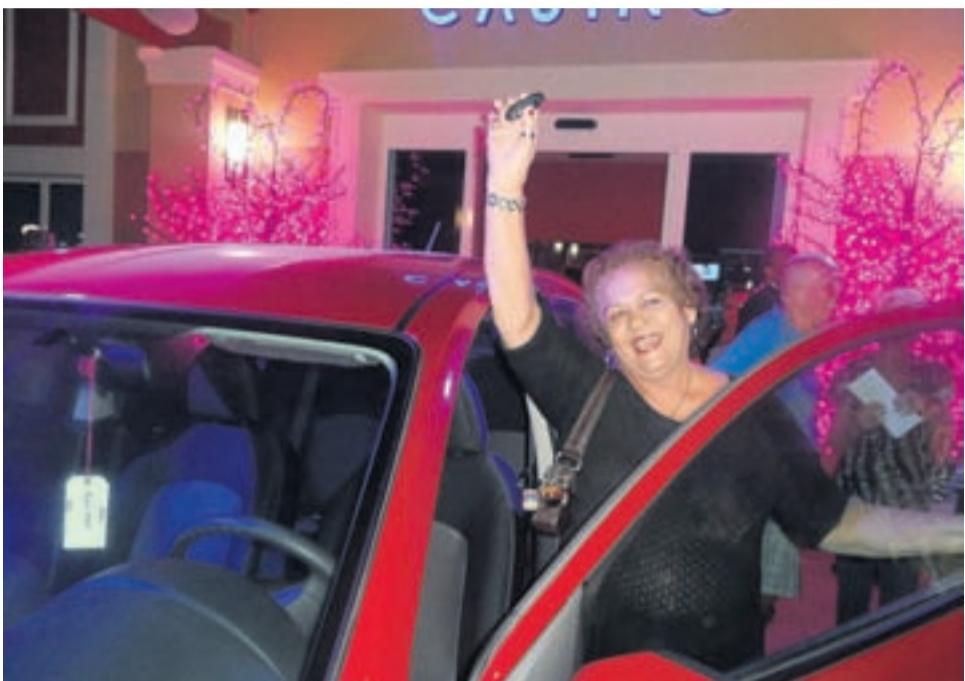
The statistics agency said energy and food prices drove the fall in September. However, the core rate — which excludes food, alcohol and tobacco — also fell, to 1 percent from 1.1 percent, further proof that underlying price pressures are benign. "This is welcome news for eurozone consumers as it helps their purchasing power and it also means that the ECB can at the very least maintain its extremely accommodative policy for an extended period and actually has ample scope to take further stimulative action if it feels the need," said Howard Archer, chief European economist at IHS Global Insight. Though the inflation figures will likely be discussed this week when the ECB holds its monthly meeting, they are unlikely to prompt any immediate action. The ECB is tasked with setting monetary policy to keep inflation at just below 2 percent, but few economists think the central bank's governing council will reduce its benchmark rate further from the record low of 0.5 percent amid signs that the economy is recovering. In the second quarter of 2013, the eurozone economy grew by a quarterly rate of 0.3 percent, largely on the back of Germany, Europe's biggest economy. □



LOCAL Aruba TODAY

AT THE GLITZ CASINO:

Felicia Perez Is The Lucky Winner Of A New Nissan Versa!



ORANJESTAD. September 30th 2013: Glitz Casino was packed with players on Sunday waiting on the announcement of the winners that participated to win 5 fabulous prizes. At exactly 11:15pm all the winners were called on stage to pick

their lucky ticket and then lead outside to see which remote would open the car. Felicia Perez was the absolute winner of a brand new car, a fabulous Nissan Versa, and was extra excited as she presently really needed a new car!

"I will no longer catch a ride with my friend but I will bring them now in my new car," Felicia happily stated. Felicia is a loyal customer of Glitz Casino together with Eusebia Bejar, Hans Mayr, Grace Hering and William Mosconi who won in-

dividual weekend stays at La Cabana Hotel. Glitz Casino is happy to give out amazing prizes to our loyal customers and invites everyone to play in the most unique casino with more chances to win every day. □

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Norma Mendiara

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PALM BEACH - The Radisson Aruba Resort Casino & Spa introduced its Wine, Cheese & Live Jazz just recently unfolding at the resort's Mira Solo Martini Bar which offers expansive beach and sea views in cosmopolitan style, while serving trendy and classic cocktails.

Every Thursday afternoon, a live jazz band, featuring

some of the island's best musicians under the musical direction of sax man Eduardo Proveyer with Dutch-born vocalist Annemiek, will complement the spectacular sunset with music, from 4:30pm.

Pictured here, the perfect setting, paired with a nice selection of imported wines and cheeses, and the best Jazz band on the island. □

Special visitors honored at the Costa Linda Beach Resort

EAGLE BEACH - Recently, Beatriz & Kenneth Mathison from Houston Texas were honored as Ambassadors of Goodwill after returning to Aruba for 20 consecutive years. Also Kristen & Debbie Mahoney were honored as Distinguished Visitors for returning to Aruba for more than

10 years consecutive. The symbolic honorary title is presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba for between 10 and 20 years consecutive. Ricardo Croes representing Aruba Tourism Authority conducted the ceremony at the

Costa Linda Beach Resort. Beatriz commented that she will never change her vacation island for any

other island. Top reason for returning provided by the honorees were they consider Aruba to be the "Hap-

py Island", the great weather, and Friendly Aruban Hospitality, white sand beaches and the local food. □



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 - ⚠ Right of way at intersection
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 - 🚫 No Left turn
 - 🚫 No Right turn



SPORTS

Aruba TODAY



Rough year so far for some top QBs

By BARRY WILNER

AP Pro Football Writer

NFL quarterbacks can be broken into three groups: elite, good and "can we find somebody else?"

That last group is growing considering what has gone on with the Buccaneers, Browns, Raiders and Jets already.

Most troublesome, however, are the recent meltdowns by some quality passers who seem to take huge steps backward when in reach of the highest level for the position. On Sunday, Matt Schaub, Matt Ryan, Jay Cutler and even Super Bowl MVP Joe Flacco fell back into some old habits that belie their status in the upper portions of the second tier of NFL quarterbacks.

And belie their hefty salaries.

Schaub's Texans were in control of their home game with the Seahawks deep into the second half. But his throw with less than three minutes left was picked off and returned for a touchdown by Richard Sherman, one of the league's top cornerbacks. The pass not only was unnecessary, it was unwise. And Schaub remained on the grass



Atlanta Falcons quarterback Matt Ryan (2) works under pressure from New England Patriots defensive end Chandler Jones (95) during the first half of an NFL football game, Sunday, Sept. 29, 2013, in Atlanta.

Associated Press

of Reliant Stadium on his hands and knees beating the ground with his fists as Sherman became the third player to return one of his passes for a touchdown this season.

That, unfortunately for the

Texans, has been an issue with Schaub throughout the team's rise to playoff qualifier: poor decision making at the worst times. "I'm the quarterback of this team," said Schaub, who was heavily booed by the

home fans. "I have the ball in my hands. This one hurts real bad."

Cutler also has been plagued by that same malady, one that seemed to have disappeared under new coach Marc Trestman.

It resurfaced, in full bloom, at Detroit.

The Lions, hardly a defensive powerhouse, had three picks, two of which set up touchdowns.

Continued on Page 20



Alex Rodriguez leaves the offices of Major League Baseball in New York, where he argued why his 211-game suspension should be overturned, Monday, Sept. 30, 2013.

Associated Press

Hearing on Alex Rodriguez grievance starts

NEW YORK (AP) — The grievance hearing over Alex Rodriguez's 211-game suspension began Monday before arbitrator Fredric Horowitz.

The New York Yankees third baseman was accompanied by lawyers when he arrived for the session at Major League Baseball's headquarters in midtown Manhattan.

A three-time American League MVP, Rodriguez was suspended Aug. 5 for

alleged violations of baseball's drug agreement and labor contract. Because he's a first offender under the drug program and the players' association filed a grievance to force an appeal, a suspension can't start until it is upheld by an arbitrator.

The union argues the discipline is without just cause and is excessive. If the case doesn't settle, a decision by Horowitz is expected this winter.

Rodriguez was among 14 players penalized by MLB this year following the sport's investigation of Biogenesis of America, a closed anti-aging clinic in Coral Gables, Florida, accused of distributing banned performance-enhancing drugs. The others accepted their penalties, including former National League MVP Ryan Braun, who missed the season's final 65 games.

Biogenesis head Anthony

Bosch was at the hearing to testify — a publicist released a photo of him in a hallway outside MLB's conference rooms.

In Florida, state authorities said they had started a criminal investigation of the clinic. "A subpoena was issued for documents, and we are looking into several areas of state interest," said Ed Griffith, spokesman for Miami-Dade County State Attorney Katherine Fernandez Rundle. □

Toronto to host 2016 NBA All-Star game

TORONTO (AP) — The 2016 NBA All-Star game is coming to Toronto, and the Raptors are looking to one of the music industry's biggest stars to help revamp the franchise in time for the festivities.

NBA deputy commissioner Adam Silver made the announcement Monday, marking the first time Toronto will hold the league's annual showcase.

Canadian rap star Drake and Mayor Rob Ford were among those at the news conference.

The Raptors also announced that Drake will be their "global ambassador" and have a voice in the team's rebranding.

Tim Lieweke, president and CEO of Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment, said the team is in the process of planning a major face-lift that will include a new look and new colors. Drake will be heavily involved in the

effort, which is expected to take the next two seasons. "I'm really out here with the people. I'm in touch with what they want to see," Drake said. "I really just want excitement for this team. I want us to be one of the biggest teams in the league."

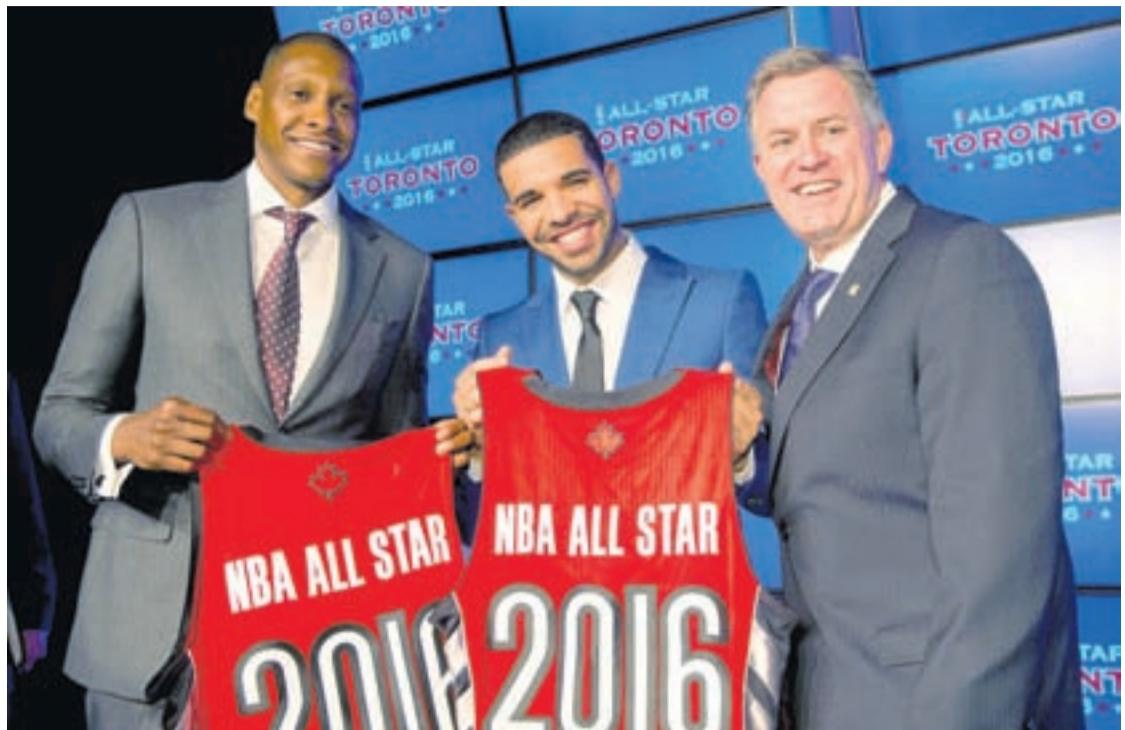
Lieweke called this the beginning of a "new age" for the Raptors.

"This is a team and this is a sport that is going to rock this city going forward," he said. "Good days are coming and we couldn't be more excited."

But the Raptors have a long way to go on the court.

They haven't made the playoffs since 2008.

"We have now a responsibility to grow our basketball team so that it meets the momentum of the All-Star game," new general manager Masai Ujiri said. "We promise you in Toronto that we're going to bring the



Toronto Raptors general manager Masai Ujiri, left, Canadian recording artist Drake, center, and Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment President and CEO Tim Lieweke pose with jerseys after the announcement that the Raptors will host the 2016 NBA All Star game at a news conference in Toronto on Monday Sept. 30, 2013.

best basketball." Silver is optimistic the Raptors will turn things around. "By the time we come here for the All-Star game there

will be a winning tradition in Toronto," he promised.

The NBA All-Star game will be held in New Orleans in 2014 and in New York in

2015. The NHL played its All-Star game in Toronto in 2000. The Toronto Blue Jays hosted baseball's showcase in 1991. □

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Driftwood Restaurant. This authentic Aruban seafood restaurant is located in characteristic downtown Oranjestad. Their

extended menu has been jubled by many. Driftwood offers daily specials, as well as a delicious 4-course menu for just \$25.95. **Charter deep sea fishing rates:** \$400 - 1/2 day • \$760 - full day. Rates per boat Max. 6 people. **Driftwood Restaurant** Authentic Aruban Seafood Restaurant; Klipstraat #12, Downtown Oranjestad. Tel: (297) 583 2515 www.driftwoodaruba.com Open hours: every day, from 5pm till 10:30pm. Sunday Closed.

QBs

Continued on Page 20

They forced a Cutler fumble on a sack for a touchdown as they moved into a tie atop the NFC North with Chicago. Before then, in three outings under Trestman, Cutler had been efficient rather than mercurial, hardly his modus operandi in previous years.

Cutler said he "felt good about my decision making," which is troublesome in itself. And Lions safety Louis Delmas, who had two interceptions, noted: "Although he's a great quarterback with a strong arm, sometimes we can read him and we got the better of him."

The main problem for Schaub and Cutler is that in big games, the opposition does just that, getting the better of them.

That also was the case for Flacco until last year. He was a quarterback who could get you into the playoffs, but not carry you to a championship.

That shiny ring and nine-figure contract he earned show that the Ravens' QB has cast off that role.

Yet he is fully capable of a stinker now and again, precisely what he provided in Buffalo.

The Bills picked off Flacco five times, the key ingredient in their 23-20 win that dropped the Ravens to 2-2. "We had four interceptions and still had a chance to win at the end," Flacco said. "With the way I



Chicago Bears quarterback Jay Cutler (6) fumbles the ball after a hit from Detroit Lions defensive tackle Ndamukong Suh (90) during the third quarter of an NFL football game against at Ford Field in Detroit, Sunday, Sept. 29, 2013. The fumble was recovered by Detroit Lions defensive tackle Nick Fairley for a 4-yard touchdown.

Associated Press

played, turning the ball over and all that, the fact that we were able to hang in there and still have a shot at the end, we did certain things well."

And certain things very poorly, such as forcing throws, something that damaged Flacco's game at various times in his first five pro seasons.

Perhaps most maddening among the miscues by the second-level QBs is what Atlanta's Matt Ryan does. Like Schaub, Cutler and

Flacco - yeah, Flacco deserves a, uh, pass for winning a title, and he gets one here - Ryan is supremely talented. The Falcons are treating him like a franchise quarterback, and he's taken them to the verge of major achievements.

Yet, just as in Sunday night's loss to New England, and especially in last January's NFC championship game defeat by San Francisco, that huge play that would lift him into the category of Brady, Rodgers, Brees, Ro-

ethlisberger and the Manning brothers just isn't there. Still, Schaub, Ryan, Flacco and perhaps even Cutler if the Bears ante up on a new contract after his current one expires at the end of the season, are in better places than Eli Manning and Ben Roethlisberger. Neither has played well in 0-4 starts, but each appears to have a team crumbling around him. The Giants and Steelers can't protect their star QBs, can't run the ball efficient-

ly enough and no longer have defenses that can rescue sputtering offenses. That has forced Manning and Roethlisberger to gamble even beyond their norms, and it's been a recipe for defeat four times already.

Not that we will hear Tom Coughlin and Mike Tomlin complaining about their quarterbacks.

All they need do is look at Jacksonville or Tampa or Oakland for some comfort. □



New York Red Bulls' Tim Cahill, right, yells in celebration after he scored a goal against the Seattle Sounders in the second half of an MLS soccer match, Sunday, Sept. 29, 2013, in Seattle.

Associated Press

MLS Roundup

Cahill goal helps Red Bulls regain MLS lead

The Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — Australian international Tim Cahill scored a 76th-minute equalizer to help the New York Red Bulls secure a 1-1 draw with the Seattle Sounders on Sunday and return to the top of the MLS standings. The Red Bulls lead the eastern conference with 52 points, one clear of the Sounders, who

share the Western Conference lead with Real Salt Lake. Brad Evans opened the scoring with a penalty for the Sounders just before half time. Cahill scored his ninth goal of the season to equalize. The Columbus Crew had a 4-2 win over FC Dallas at Frisco, with Dominic Oduro scoring once and setting up Jairo Arrieta's goal in the first half.

The Crew moved into a share of sixth place in the eastern conference, a point out of a playoff spot with three matches remaining. Portland held on for a 1-0 win at home over the Los Angeles Galaxy to solidify its hold on the fourth spot in the MLS standings, with Maximiliano Urruti scoring his first Major League Soccer goal. □

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NHL players approve hybrid icing rule

TORONTO (AP) — A rule change involving icing the puck will be in effect for the start of the NHL regular season after it was approved by the players.

The NHLPA gave the go-ahead for the rule change that makes icing a race to an imaginary line across the faceoff dots instead of the puck, which was given a trial run during the pre-season.

Previously, a player had to actually touch the puck after it crossed the red goal line. Icing is called when a team, in an effort to reduce pressure in its own zone, dumps the puck down the ice. When icing is called, play is brought back to the offending team's zone for a faceoff.

The rule change is to prevent serious injuries, such as the one that sidelined Carolina Hurricanes defenseman Joni Pitkanen for the entire season.

Pitkanen broke his left heel bone in eight places on an icing touch-up in April. It's a similar injury to the one sustained by former Washington Capitals forward Pat Peake, whose career ended not too long after. "After testing hybrid icing during the preseason games, the players participated in a survey and a majority of teams supported this rule change in an effort to make the game safer," NHLPA special assistant to the executive director Mathieu Schneider said in a statement.

"We are hopeful that the implementation of the hybrid icing rule, which is a middle ground between the old rule and no-touch icing, will help minimize the incidence of player injuries on icing plays."

Some players seemed



Dallas Stars goalie Dan Ellis (30) falls on a loose puck in front of teammate Jyrki Jokipakka (45), of Finland, and Edmonton Oilers center Mark Arcobello (62) in the third period of an NHL preseason hockey game in Oklahoma City, Friday, Sept. 27, 2013. Dallas won 4-0.

happy with the change. "I think it's good. It kind of brings the race a little bit further away from the end boards," Toronto Maple Leafs winger James van Riemsdyk said. "Once they do blow it or decide what to do with it, it gives you more time to react."

Others expressed some doubts about hybrid icing, most notably hesitancy or unfamiliarity on the part of the linesman who has to make the call.

"The normal reaction is right away 'Oh, we don't like it,'" Calgary Flames coach Bob Hartley said. "If the hybrid icing saves one injury this year, it's worth it." NHLPA executive director

Donald Fehr said in an interview last week with the Canadian Press that he hopes hybrid icing represents "an obvious safety improvement (that is) not otherwise damaging to the game," but conceded that it's different from his vantage point and players'.

"It's going to require adjustment and while we've seen it ultimately work in college and in other leagues, it's not the same as playing in the NHL, and we're going to have to watch it very carefully because our game is played at a higher speed than anywhere else," commissioner Gary Bettman said. The AHL experimented with

it last season during the NHL lockout, and it came with mixed reviews from players. Hartley said AHL coaches hated it for the first two weeks and loved it by Christmas.

It's possible it takes time for NHL players and coaches to embrace it now.

"There's going to be some missed calls," Hartley said. "It's kind of a grey area. It's a judgment call and every time you create a judgment call, there's going to be some calls going your way or against you, calls you like and don't like."

Montreal Canadiens forward Max Pacioretty expressed concern about a missed call happening at

the worst possible time.

"I know you want to protect the players and this is a step in the right direction, but I'm just scared that that Game 7, game-winning goal is going to come down to a hybrid icing non-call and there's going to be a big uproar about it," he said. Maple Leafs captain Dion Phaneuf prefers the traditional race to the puck over hybrid icing, but says he can live with the change. "I think for me personally it's just what I've been used to how the game's been played for a long time, so obviously it's an adjustment," Phaneuf said. "You're going to adapt to either way." □

Tsonga beats Monfils to advance at Japan Open

TOKYO (AP) — Second-seeded Jo-Wilfried Tsonga needed four match points to beat Gael Monfils 6-3, 7-6 (8) on Monday to advance to the second round of the Japan Open.

Tsonga fired 11 aces and didn't drop a service game in the match to improve his record to four wins in five tour-level matches against his French compatriot. After Tsonga got the decisive break of the first set in the second game, the second set went with serve until the tiebreaker.

Monfils rallied from a 5-1 deficit to level the tiebreaker at 5-5, then fought off

three match points before Tsonga sealed the victory. "I started well and played offensively," Tsonga said. "I know this is the only way for me to beat Gael."

Tsonga began the year strongly, reaching the quarterfinals at the Australian Open and the semifinals at the French Open. After finishing runnerup to Andy Murray at Queen's, however, Tsonga was forced to retire with a knee injury in the second round at Wimbledon and did not enter the U.S. Open as a result.

"I have not played much in the last two or three months, so it will take me time to ad-

just," said Tsonga, adding that was cramping near the end of the match.

In other first-round action, sixth-seeded Nicolas Almagro of Spain beat German qualifier Benjamin Becker 7-6 (4), 7-6 (3) and Alexandr Dolgopolov of Ukraine defeated Daniel Brands of Germany 6-3, 6-1. Top-seeded Juan Martin del Potro of Argentina was scheduled to play Marcos Baghdatis of Cyprus in a first-round match on Tuesday, when defending champion Kei Nishikori was due to meet Jurgen Melzer of Austria. □



Jo-Wilfried Tsonga of France returns the ball against his compatriot Gael Monfils during their first round match at the Japan Open Tennis Championships in Tokyo, Monday, Sept. 30, 2013.

Associated Press

Petkovic knocks out Azarenka in China Open

BEIJING (AP) — Defending champion Victoria Azarenka was knocked out in the first round of the China Open on Monday, losing 6-4, 2-6, 6-4 to Andrea Petkovic of Germany.

The second-ranked Azarenka double-faulted 15 times and was broken five times by Petkovic, who reached the final here in 2011.

"I'm very happy with my performance," Petkovic said. "I was happy with my movement and my serve for the most part, and I managed to get a lot of balls back very deep and very strong. Parts of the match were a really, really good level - some parts I lost a bit of energy, but overall I'm very happy."

It was the second tournament in row in which Azarenka lost her first match, having been beaten by Venus Williams in Tokyo last week.

"It was an awful match and a very bad performance from me, so there's not much to say about it," Azarenka said. "It happens once, twice a year to every player, and it happened to me today."

Also Monday, eighth-



Victoria Azarenka of Belarus reacts after losing a point against Venus Williams of the United States during their second round match of the Pan Pacific Open tennis tournament in Tokyo Tuesday, Sept. 24, 2013.

Associated Press

seeded Jelena Jankovic rallied for a 1-6, 6-4, 6-0 win over Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova of Russia. Former No. 1-ranked Jankovic had lost three of her four previous matches against Pavlyuchenkova and didn't start well in Beijing, but recovered to break her opponent three times in each of the second and third sets. The 28-year-old Jankovic, who won the title here in 2008, took control of the

match as her opponent struggled with her first serves and double-faulted nine times.

Jankovic's compatriots Ana Ivanovic and Bojana Jovanovski joined her in the second round with easier straight-set victories. Ivanovic defeated Flavia Pennetta of Italy 7-6 (9), 6-1 while Jovanovski took just 77 minutes to dispose of Sorana Cirstea of Romania 6-3, 6-2.

In the doubles, wild-card entries Serena and Venus Williams wasted chances to win before losing 6-7 (3), 6-4, 11-9 in a Champions tiebreaker to Liezel Huber and Taiwan's Chan Hao-ching. Serena Williams double-faulted on match point to hand her opponents the win, and then angrily slammed her racket against the court three times before tossing it to the side.

In the men's draw, Australian Lleyton Hewitt knocked out seventh-seeded Tommy Haas of Germany 7-6 (6), 6-3 in the first round. Australia's Bernard Tomic, Fabio Fognini of Italy and Philipp Kohlschreiber of Germany also advanced. □

Australian yacht club 1st to challenge Ellison



Oracle Team USA passes the skyline with Coit Tower and Telegraph Hill visible in the distance before the 14th race of the America's Cup sailing event on Saturday, Sept. 21, 2013, in San Francisco.

Associated Press

BERNIE WILSON

AP Sports Writer

SAN DIEGO (AP)

Australia is back in the America's Cup for the first time since 2000 after a challenge by winemaker and sailor Bob Oatley was accepted by U.S. software billionaire Larry Ellison.

The challenge by the Hamilton Island Yacht Club, located on the edge of the Great Barrier Reef, was announced Monday. It was received by the Golden Gate Yacht Club on Wednesday, right after Ellison's Oracle Team USA retained the America's Cup by completing a remarkable comeback from 8-1 down against Emirates Team New Zealand on San Francisco Bay.

The Hamilton Island Yacht Club will be the challenger of record, helping shape the rules for the 35th America's Cup along with the GGYC and other challengers.

"Given Australia's previous success in the America's Cup, the Admiral's Cup and Olympic yachting, and as proud Australians, we think it is time for our nation to be back in our sport's pinnacle event," Oatley said in a statement. "The recently completed America's Cup in San Francisco has revolutionized the sport for sailors and fans, and we were excited to see how many Australians played key roles on the teams and in the regatta organization."

In 1983, Australia II beat Dennis Conner's Liberty to end the New York Yacht Club's 132-year winning streak in the America's Cup. □

Amazon unveils Kindle Fire HDX with 24/7 live help

RYAN NAKASHIMA
AP Business Writer

SEATTLE (AP) — Amazon is refreshing its lineup of tablet computers with new devices called Kindle Fire HDX, which are significantly faster and lighter than the previous generation.

The 7-inch (17.7-centimeter) and 8.9-inch (22.6-centimeter) versions also have sharper, more colorful displays than older models, and both have more pixels per inch than the latest iPad. To help those who are unfamiliar with tablets, the new Kindles come with a feature called "Mayday," which allows users to summon a live customer service representative in a tiny video window. The helpers can explain new features or troubleshoot problems while guiding users with on-screen hand scribbles. They can even take control of the device from afar.

CEO Jeff Bezos introduced the feature to reporters Tuesday, saying it is "completely unique" and takes advantage of Amazon's massive cloud computing

and customer service infrastructure. It also builds on Amazon.com Inc.'s reputation for excellent customer service.

"You shouldn't have to be afraid of your device," Bezos said.

In a demo, Bezos asked an on-screen customer service rep to recommend a hot app. The rep mentioned "Angry Birds: Star Wars II." Bezos also received instructions on how to set time limits on various activities for children.

While the new Kindles are upgraded in several ways, Amazon also cut the price on what will be its entry-level 7-inch tablet, the Kindle Fire HD with 8 gigabytes of memory, to \$139. The base HD model previously cost \$199, but had 16 gigabytes of memory. The price makes the tablet just \$20 more than Amazon's latest dedicated e-reader, the Kindle Paperwhite. The Kindle Fire HD is sheathed in a new magnesium alloy body like the HDX models, but has the same screen resolution and processing



In this image distributed on Tuesday, Sept. 24, 2013, Amazon.com Founder and CEO Jeff Bezos introduces the all-new Kindle Fire HDX 8.9", right, and Kindle Fire HD 7" tablet in Seattle."

Associated Press

power of the older model. However, it drops the front-facing camera and microphone found in last year's HD.

Stephen Baker, a consumer technology analyst with research firm NPD Group, said the price cut

to the Kindle Fire HD will do more to help Amazon compete in the tablet market than the added features on the newer models.

"That's where that model needs to be priced," Baker said, explaining that there are numerous manufacturers with tablets with screens that measure 7 inches diagonally — all priced around \$150. "A big focus in that 7-inch category is just price."

In the May-July period, Kindles accounted for 17 percent of all tablets sold in the U.S., compared with 48 percent for Apple's iPad and 8 percent for Samsung's Galaxy line, according to NPD.

Globally, Amazon's shipments in the April-June quarter were down 59 percent from a year earlier at 470,000, NPD said. That compared with 14.6 million for Apple's iPad, down 17 percent from a year ago, and 10.8 million for Samsung's Galaxy line, which is more than six times more than a year earlier. Amazon sells most of its Kindles around the Christmas holidays, Baker said.

The Kindle HDX models come with Qualcomm's quad-core Snapdragon 800 processor, which is top of the line for tablets. Amazon said they are three times faster than the older

Kindle Fire line. For graphics functions, the HDX models are four times faster than before.

Beyond the improved specifications, Amazon also unveiled more features that incorporate data from its IMDb movie database business. With the newer tablets, users who turn on the "X-ray" feature can see a small window that lists the name of a song that is playing in some TV shows and movies. One tap brings up the option to buy the song. Users can also look for all music in a show and zip to the exact spot where a particular song is playing. People who have set up Amazon's video player as an app on their Internet-connected TVs or through game consoles can also follow along in real time on their tablets, getting information on actors and trivia related to the shows on the big screen.

Music lovers can see song lyrics when they play songs purchased from Amazon. Lyrics are highlighted as they are sung. Tapping on the lyrics will zip to the appropriate point in the song. Bezos said these services are only possible because Amazon provides the hardware, operating system, applications, cloud infrastructure and services for the devices. □

7 more Alexie books coming out as e-books

By HILLEL ITALIE
AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Sherman Alexie is learning to live with e-books, conflicts and all. Once one of the harshest opponents of books on a screen, Alexie has in the past two years allowed a handful of his works to be released digitally, including his prize-winning young adult novel "The Absolutely True Story of a Part-Time Indian." He is now making seven additional books available.

Open Road Integrated Media, a digital publisher, announced Monday that it had acquired rights to "The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fist-fight in Heaven," "Reservation Blues" and other early Alexie fiction. The new editions will come out Oct. 15. The author has denounced Amazon.com's Kindle as

elitist and worries about the future of physical stores. But in a video released by Open Road, he said he wanted his books to be read as widely as possible. "I'm famous, or infamous, for objecting to electronic literature and e-books," he said. "At the beginning my hate was sort of global, but now it's modified a bit. I still have serious issues with the politics and economic philosophies involved in much of the electronic book world but I'm also vitally interested in reaching more of my readers and reaching a younger generation of readers who are more technologically savvy and tech addicted, and in order to reach them I have to do this."

Alexie, who turns 47 on Oct. 7, told The Associated Press during a recent tele-

phone interview that those younger readers included his two sons, ages 12 and 16. "In order to keep talking to them," he said, it was important to keep up with technology. He is a fan of the iPad - "I love my iPad," he declared in his video - and gave one to his mother to help her keep up with current events.

But he has not changed his mind about Amazon. He did not mention the Kindle in his video and told the AP that he still views the online retailer as a would-be monopoly that wants to be the "publisher, the editor, the distributor and the bookstore."

"They are seeking to be the only thing in the business and I don't like that," said Alexie, who will, in any case, allow his e-books to be sold on Amazon. □

Stocks sink as government heads toward possible shutdown

AP Markets Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — U.S. stocks sank Monday as Wall Street worried that a budget fight in Washington could lead to an event far worse for the economy—a failure to raise the nation's borrowing limit.

Investors pulled back from stocks as a budget fight in Congress threatened to push the government into a partial shutdown for the first time in 17 years. Lawmakers have until midnight Tuesday to reach a budget deal that would keep government in full operation. There is a simple reason why the budget battle—and, more importantly, an upcoming fight over the debt ceiling—are so crucial: the credit of the United States is the bedrock that nearly every other investment is built upon, largely due to the assumption that the nation will always pay its debts.

"The concern is government has become so polarized that if it cannot pass (a budget), there's a greater chance that the debt ceiling battle will go to the brink or possibly lead to a default," said Alec Young, global equity strategist with S&P Capital IQ.

The Dow Jones industrial

average fell 129 points, or 0.8 percent, to close at 15,129.67.

The Standard & Poor's 500 slid 10 points, or 0.6 percent, to 1,681.55 and the Nasdaq composite dropped 10 points, or 0.3 percent, to 3,771.48.

Monday's decline adds to what has been eventful September for investors. Stocks hit an all-time on Sept. 18 after the Federal Reserve voted to keep up its economic stimulus program. But that enthusiasm vanished as Wall Street began to worry that the political bickering between Democrats and Republicans would lead to a government shutdown and crisis over the debt ceiling. A partial government shutdown is all but certain. Congress and the White House were no closer to a budget deal Monday afternoon. If no deal is reached by midnight Tuesday, the federal government will partially shut down for the first time in 17 years. A brief shutdown wouldn't hit the economy and stock market that hard.

But a shutdown lasting two weeks could slice 0.3 percent points off U.S. gross domestic product, accord-

ing to a report by Macro-economic Advisers. That is because hundreds of thousands of federal workers will go without a paycheck.

"You're putting a lot of

nies that depend on federal contracts."

Some investors think a shutdown may be a positive event in the long-term. The political pressure from a shutdown could force

strategist at TD Ameritrade. Treasury Secretary Jack Lew said last week that the government would run out of borrowing authority by roughly Oct. 17. The last time the debt ceiling



Italian Prime Minister Enrico Letta, center, tours the trading floor of the New York Stock Exchange. U.S. stocks sank Monday as Wall Street worried that a budget fight in Washington could lead to an event far worse for the economy—a failure to raise the nation's borrowing limit.

(AP Photo/Richard Drew)

people, at least temporarily, out of work and out of pay, and that will affect spending," said Kathy Jones, vice president of fixed income strategy at Charles Schwab. "It slows down activity on compa-

nies that depend on federal contracts."

"This may be good thing in the long run because it may lead to compromise," said J.J. Kinahan, chief

issue came up in August 2011, it led to Standard & Poor's downgrading the United States' credit rating and the Dow went through nearly three weeks of nau-sitting triple-digits moves almost daily. □

Report: US has no plans to issue jobs data during shutdown

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Labor Department has no plans to release the closely watched U.S. monthly jobs report on Friday in case of a partial government shutdown that lasts through the week. A Labor official with direct knowledge said Monday that there wouldn't be enough staffers on site to compile the jobs report. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorized to discuss the matter publicly. A document the department filed Friday said its Bureau of Labor Statistics, which prepares the jobs data, would have only three employees working in case of a partial government shutdown.

The monthly jobs report includes the unemployment rate and the number of

jobs employers added. It is one of the most influential economic reports in the world. Its data can heavily affect global financial markets.

"In the event there is a

lapse in funding, we will engage in an orderly shutdown on Tuesday morning," said Stephen Barr, a Labor Department spokesman. "All program operations will cease." Barr de-

clined to elaborate.

If the White House and Congress fail to agree on a spending bill by Tuesday, much of the government will shut down. Erica Groshen, commissioner of the BLS, said in a memo Friday that the agency would close. Groshen noted that during a government shutdown in 1995, the Labor Department issued a monthly report on inflation because the government had already gathered the data. Groshen's memo implied that a similar approach could be taken with the jobs figures. But the data won't be ready by Tuesday, the Labor official said. Much of the work involved in compiling the employment data takes place between Tuesday and Thursday. "The timing of any shutdown is criti-



A Help Wanted sign is displayed in the window of a restaurant at a shopping center in Charlotte, N.C. The Labor Department has no plans to release the closely watched U.S. monthly jobs report on Friday in case of a partial government shutdown that lasts through the week, an official with direct knowledge said Monday.

(AP Photo/Chuck Burton)

cal," Groshen said in her memo. If the government shut down but reopened by Wednesday, it's possible the jobs report could be released Friday.

In contrast to the uncertainty surrounding the release of the jobs data, Labor plans to issue its weekly report on applications for unemployment benefits as scheduled Thursday. Those figures are gathered by state governments.

Officials at the Commerce Department have said that department will issue no regularly scheduled economic indicators if Congress fails to fund the government past Monday. That would mean that Tuesday's scheduled report on construction spending and Thursday's data on factory orders would be postponed. □

INVEST-TREND

AOL founder looking outside Silicon Valley

MICHAEL LIEDTKE

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — AOL co-founder Steve Case is looking to finance entrepreneurs who are trying to build technology companies outside Silicon Valley, just like he once did.

The startups will be bankrolled by a \$200 million fund that Case's Revolution Ventures announced Monday. Although ideas submitted from Silicon Valley won't be excluded, Case expects 90 percent of the money to be funneled to entrepreneurs living outside the San Francisco Bay Area. The national focus is similar to a \$450 million fund that Revolution LLC launched two years. The older fund makes slightly larger investments of \$30 million to \$50 million in more mature companies.

"This is isn't any negative on Silicon Valley. We think Silicon Valley is awesome," Case said in an interview. "But there are also a lot of great entrepreneurs in other parts of the country and there is not as much capital focused on them."

About 40 percent of the venture capital invested in U.S. startups is concentrated in Silicon Valley, based on statistics compiled by PriceWaterhouseCoopers and the National Venture Capital Association.

The newly minted Revolution Ventures fund has already invested undisclosed amounts in four startups scattered around the country.

They are: Chicago's BenchPrep, an online service that helps students prepare for academic tests; New York's Booker Software, an online business management service; Washington, D.C.'s Homesnap, the maker of a mobile residential real estate application for mobile devices; and Boston's RunKeeper, the maker of a free health and fitness app for mobile devices. □

Sweden's IKEA starts selling solar panels for homes**MALIN RISING**

Associated Press

STOCKHOLM (AP) — Swedish flat-pack furniture giant IKEA will start selling residential solar panels at its stores in Britain, the first step in its plan to bring renewable energy to the mainstream market worldwide.

The company started selling solar panels made by China's Hanergy in its store in Southampton on Monday. It will sell them in the rest of Britain in coming months, it said.

A standard, all-black 3.36 kilowatt system for a semi-

detached home will cost 5,700 British pounds (\$9,200) and will include an in-store consultation and design service as well as installation, maintenance and energy monitoring service.

"In the past few years the prices on solar panels have dropped, so it's a really good price now," IKEA Chief Sustainability Officer Steve Howard told The Associated Press. "It's the right time to go for the consumers."

The solar panel investment will be paid off in about seven years for an aver-

age home owner in Britain, Howard said.

"If you are going to be in your house that long, your energy will be free after seven years," he said.

Some retailers in the U.S., including the Home Depot and Lowe's, already sell solar panels. But in other parts of the world, consumers often have to research a myriad specialist firms before making a purchase.

Howard said IKEA aims to launch the products in other countries eventually. It picked Britain as its test market because it has the

right combination of mid-level electricity prices and government-sponsored financial incentives that make investing in solar energy attractive to consumers. "This is a market by market decision," he said. The U.K. government offers private solar panel owners the opportunity to sell back electricity to the grid on days when they have surplus production and has a financing plan for solar power investments, which means residents can buy a system for no upfront cost and pay it off gradually. □

Corn falls to lowest in more than 3 years on review**STEVE ROTHWELL**

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The price of corn fell to its lowest in more than three years after a U.S. government estimate of corn stocks came in higher than traders had anticipated.

Corn for December delivery fell 12.5 cents, or 2.8 percent, to \$4.4150 a bushel. That's its lowest since Aug. 31, 2010.

The price of corn has been falling this summer after farmers planted the most of the grain in 80 years and last year's drought wasn't repeated.

The United States Agriculture Department said Monday that corn stocks totaled 824 million bushels. (1 bushel of corn=25.4 kilograms, or 56 pounds).

"I don't think anyone expected this much corn available," said Todd Hultman, a grains analyst at DTN.

Soybeans also fell because

stocks were higher than traders had predicted. Soybeans for November declined 37 cents, or 2.8

an ounce on Monday. The metal still ended September with its first quarterly gain in a year. The metal



Photo shows some of Brent Gruenbacher's 750 acres of corn west of Colwich, Kan. The corn harvest has begun in much of the south part of Kansas and is working its way north. Dennis Gruenbacher said this year they're seeing 119 bushels an acre, while last year they had 86 bushels and in 2011 they had zero.

(AP Photo/Mike Hutchmacher)

percent, to \$12.83 a bushel. Wheat also declined, falling 4.5 cents, or 0.7 percent, to \$6.79 a bushel.

December gold fell \$12.20,

or 0.9 percent, to \$1,327

rebounded 8.4 percent in the three-month period from July to September after slumping in the second quarter, when it was caught up in a commodities sell-

off prompted by concerns that China's growth was slowing. Silver and copper also logged strong gains in the third quarter.

On Monday, silver for December fell 12.30 cents, or 0.6 percent, to \$21.71 an ounce.

Copper for the same month dropped 0.65 cents, or 0.2 percent, to \$3.32 per pound. Platinum for January fell \$6.80, or 0.5 percent, to \$1,412.40 an ounce, and palladium for December dropped \$4.65, or 0.6 percent, to \$727.15 an ounce.

In energy trading the price of oil fell as a government shutdown loomed. Benchmark oil for November fell 54 cents, or 0.5 percent, to \$102.33 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Wholesale gasoline fell 4 cents to \$2.63 per gallon and natural gas lost 3 cents to \$3.56 per 1,000 cubic feet.

Heating oil retreated 2 cents to \$2.97 per gallon. □

Oil falls on American, European political turmoil**The Associated Press**

NEW YORK (AP) — The price of oil fell Monday as a partial shutdown of the U.S. government loomed over the markets.

Benchmark oil for November delivery dropped 54 cents to \$102.33 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Oil fell as low as \$101.05 before recovering. Stocks declined, as did

gold and other metals.

The U.S. government will reach its borrowing limit, or debt ceiling, on Tuesday. If Congress doesn't raise that limit, the government won't be able to pay all its bills and some 800,000 of the 2.1 million federal employees will not go to work.

A lasting solution seemed far off as the White House and Republican lawmak-

ers still disagree sharply on spending cuts and other key budget issues.

Goldman Sachs estimated that a three-week shutdown would slow the economy's annual growth rate in the October-December quarter by up to 0.9 percentage points. If so, the growth rate next quarter would be 1.6 percent, compared with market

expectations of a 2.5 percent growth. Political uncertainty also surfaced in Italy, where Prime Minister Enrico Letta will face a confidence vote on Wednesday after ministers from Silvio Berlusconi's center-right bloc pulled out of the five-month government. Markets are concerned that key economic reforms will not be implemented if the government falls. □

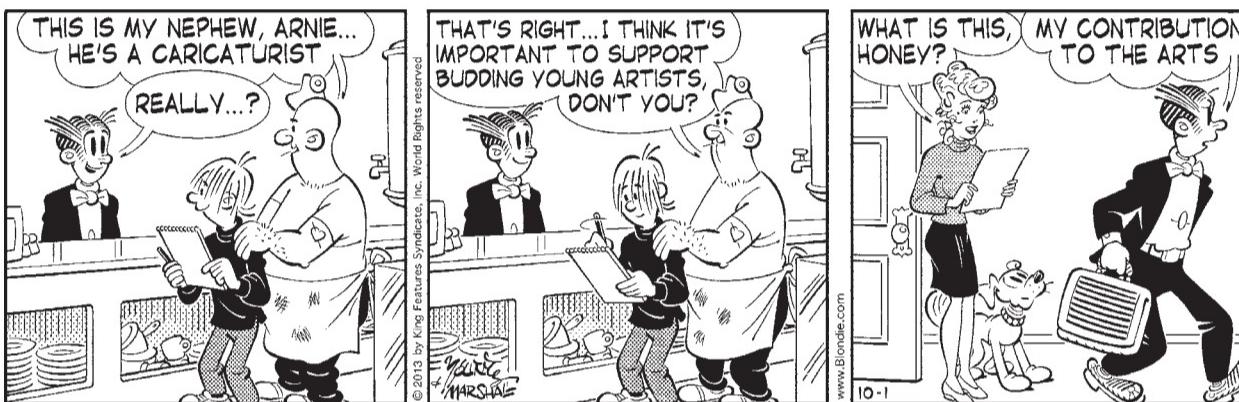
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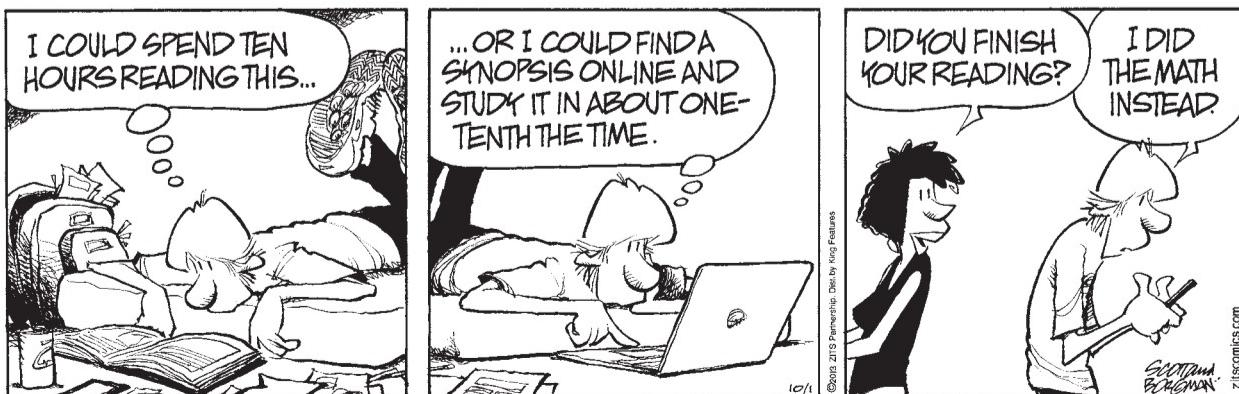
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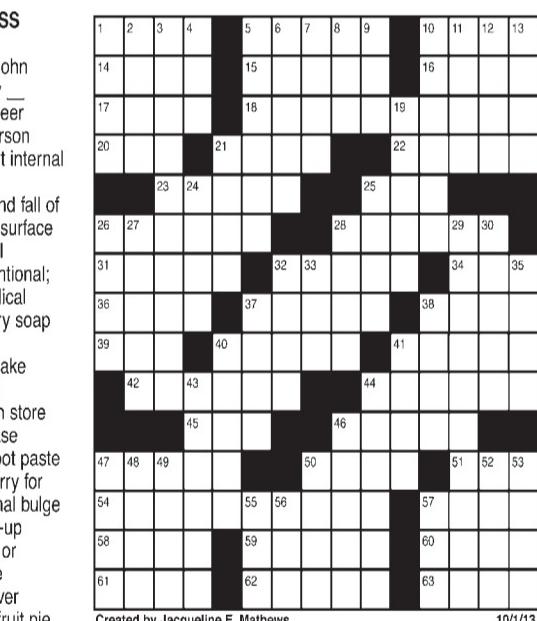
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Difficulty Level ★★

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Yesterday's puzzle answer



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

10/1/13

Monday's Puzzle Solved

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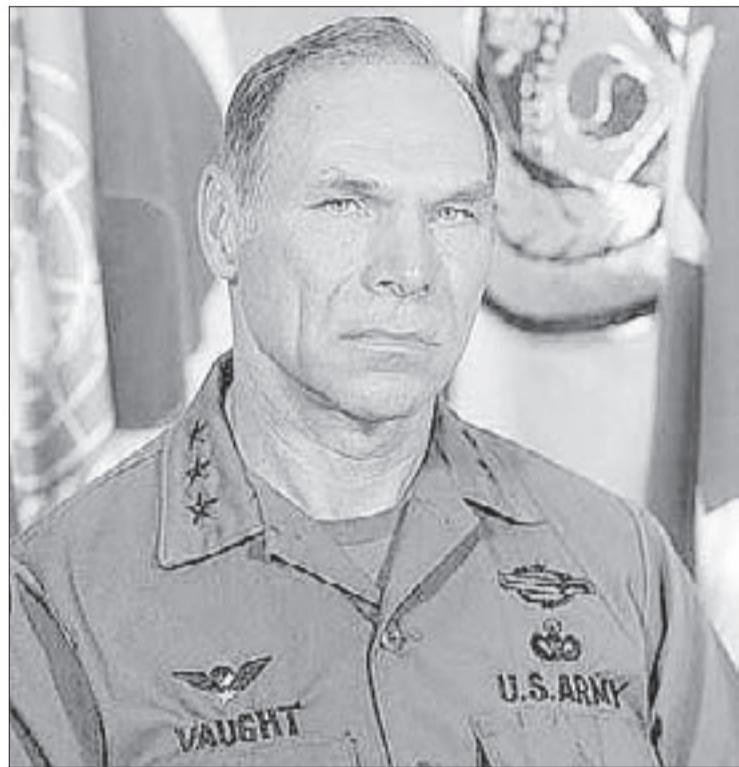
- 3 Three-dimensional works of art
4 Definite article
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6 Keaton or Ladd
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33 As mad as a wet ___
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37 Group of rowers
38 Related
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41 Part of the leg
43 Dried plums
44 Seashores
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49 Freeway entrance
50 Faucet problem
52 Still in the sack
53 Sweet potatoes
55 That guy
56 Fuss & bother
57 In a ___; soon

James Vaught, who led Iran hostage mission, dies at 86

RICHARD GOLDSTEIN

© 2013 New York Times

Lt. Gen. James B. Vaught, the commander of the Carter administration's disastrous April 1980 mission aimed at freeing more than 50 American hostages held in Iran, died Sept. 20 in Conway, S.C. He was 86. Vaught's body was found in a pond in Conway, near



Lt. Gen. James Vaught in an undated handout photo. Vaught, a combat veteran of the Korean and Vietnam Wars, was the commander of the Carter administration's failed 1980 mission to free 50 hostages held in Iran. He died Sept. 20, 2013 in Conway, S.C., at the age of 86.

(U.S. Army via The New York Times)

his home in Myrtle Beach. He drowned, evidently after falling out of his small boat, and an autopsy also revealed signs of cardiac disease, a coroner, Robert Edge, told The Associated Press.

Vaught, a combat veteran of the Korean and Vietnam Wars and a graduate of the Army's commando-style Ranger school, was chosen to oversee an unconventional, risky and complex operation to rescue hostages taken by Islamic militants who overran the U.S. Embassy in Tehran in November 1979.

Some 90 commandos from the Army's Delta Force, who were transported in Air Force planes, and Marines flying eight Navy helicopters from an aircraft carrier were to rendezvous at night in the Iranian desert. The helicopters were to fly the Delta Force troops to a site near Tehran, where they were to be trans-

ferred to trucks the following night, sneak into the Iranian capital, extract the hostages from the Embassy and bring them out of Iran aboard the choppers. Vaught, who had overseen the training for the mission, was at a base in Egypt to monitor the raid. Commanders from the Army, Air Force and Marines were at

unforeseen sandstorm put three of the eight helicopters out of action, leaving one fewer than the minimum of six needed to fly the Army commandos from the desert to the Tehran area. That caused Carter to call off the operation. Then one of the helicopters preparing to depart crashed into a parked Air Force transport plane, causing an explosion and fireball that killed eight servicemen. Carter took responsibility for the mission's failure. A report by a Pentagon commission listed numerous problems in the planning and execution of the mission and cited a lack of sufficient coordination among the service branches, though it did not assign blame to Vaught or the commanders under him. Ronald Reagan made the failed mission an issue in defeating Carter in his bid for a second term. The hostages were not released until the day Reagan was inaugurated, 444 days after they were taken captive.

In an interview with Newsday in 2005, Vaught touched on interservice rivalry. He said he had sought to inspect the Navy helicopters while they were being prepared for the mission aboard the aircraft carrier Nimitz, but was turned down by the Joint Chiefs.

"I was told it was the Navy's job, and it was perfectly capable of preparing and repairing them," he said. "I had no authority except

over the Army guys."

James Benjamin Vaught was born in Conway on Nov. 3, 1926. "I am a direct lineal descendant of Francis Marion," he told the Conway-area news site GrandStrandDaily.com in 2011, referring to the South Carolina militia commander known as the Swamp Fox for waging guerrilla war against the British in the Revolutionary War. "Some of those unconventional warfare genes carried through the years." He attended the Citadel in Charleston, S.C., for three semesters before being drafted into the Army and obtaining a lieutenant's commission. He served in the post-World War II occupation of Germany, was an infantry company commander in the Korean War and a battalion commander of helicopter-borne troops in the Vietnam War, taking part in the liberation of Hue and the relief of Marines who were besieged at their Khe Sanh outpost. □

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NASA preparing to launch 3-D printer into space

MARTHA MENDOZA

AP National Writer

MOFFETT FIELD, California

(AP) — NASA is preparing to launch a 3-D printer into space next year, a toaster-sized game changer that greatly reduces the need for astronauts to load up with every tool, spare part or supply they might ever need.

The printers would serve as a flying factory of infinite designs, creating objects by extruding layer upon layer of plastic from long strands coiled around large spools. Doctors use them to make replacement joints and artists use them to build exquisite jewelry.

In NASA labs, engineers are 3-D printing small satellites that could shoot out of the Space Station and transmit data to earth, as well as replacement parts and rocket pieces that can survive extreme temperatures.

"Any time we realize we can 3-D print something in space, it's like Christmas," said inventor Andrew Filo, who is consulting with NASA on the project. "You can get rid of concepts



Tools and parts made by a 3D printer are displayed at Made in Space on Monday, Sept. 16, 2013, in Mountain View, Calif.

Associated Press

like rationing, scarce or irreplaceable."

The spools of plastic could eventually replace racks of extra instruments and hardware, although the upcoming mission is just a demonstration printing job. "If you want to be adaptable, you have to be able to design and manufacture on the fly, and that's where 3-D printing in space comes in," said Dave Kors-

meyer, director of engineering at NASA's Ames Research Center at Moffett Field, about 35 miles south of San Francisco.

For the first 3-D printer in space test slated for fall 2014, NASA had more than a dozen machines to choose from, ranging from \$300 desktop models to \$500,000 warehouse builders.

All of them, however, were

built for use on Earth, and space travel presented challenges, from the loads and vibrations of launch to the stresses of working in orbit, including microgravity, differing air pressures, limited power and variable temperatures.

As a result, NASA hired Silicon Valley startup Made In Space to build something entirely new.

"Imagine an astronaut needing to make a life-or-death repair on the International Space Station," said Aaron Kemmer, CEO of Made in Space. "Rather than hoping that the necessary parts and tools are on the station already, what if the parts could be 3-D printed when they needed them?"

When staffing his start up in 2010, Kemmer and his partners warned engineers there would be ups and downs — nauseating ones. In more than a dozen flights in NASA's "vomit comet" reduced-gravity aircraft, Made In Space scientists tested printer after printer. Last week at their headquarters on NASA's campus, Made In Space engineers in lab coats and hair nets tinkered with a sealed 3-D printer in a dust free cleanroom, preparing the models for further pre-launch tests.

As proof of its utility, the team revisited the notorious 1970 moon-bound Apollo 13 breakdown, when as-

tronauts were forced to jury-rig a lifesaving carbon dioxide filter holder with a plastic bag, a manual cover and duct tape. "Safety has been one of our biggest concerns," said strategic officer Michael Chen. Sparks, breakages and electric surges can have grave consequences in the space station. "But when we get it right, we believe these are the only way to manifest living in space," he said.

Space-bound printers will also, eventually, need to capture gasses emitted from the extruded plastics, be able to print their own parts for self-repairs and have some abilities to recycle printed products into new ones.

Scott Crump, who helped develop 3-D printing technology in 1988 by making a toy frog for his daughter with a glue gun in his kitchen, said he never conceived how pivotal it could be for space travel. But he said that until metal becomes commonly used in 3-D printers, the applications will be limited.

NASA and other international space agencies are pressing forward with 3-D printing. Mastering space manufacturing, along with finding and producing water and food on the moon or other planets, could lead to living on space.

Last month, the space agency awarded Bothell, Wash.-based Tethers Unlimited \$500,000 toward a project to use 3-D printing and robots to build massive antennas and solar power generators in space by 2020.

It replaces the expensive and cumbersome process of building foldable parts on Earth and assembling them in orbit.

For Made In Space's debut, when it's shuttled up to the space station aboard a spaceflight cargo resupply mission, the initial prints will be tests — different small shapes to be studied for strength and accuracy. They're also discussing with NASA about what the first real piece that they should print will be. □

Cassini detects plastic ingredient on Saturn moon



This undated image provided by NASA shows Saturn's largest moon, Titan. NASA's Cassini spacecraft has detected the presence of a plastic ingredient in Titan's atmosphere, the first time the chemical has been found in a world other than Earth.

Associated Press

PASADENA, California (AP) — You expect to find plastics in your lunch box, not on a moon of Saturn.

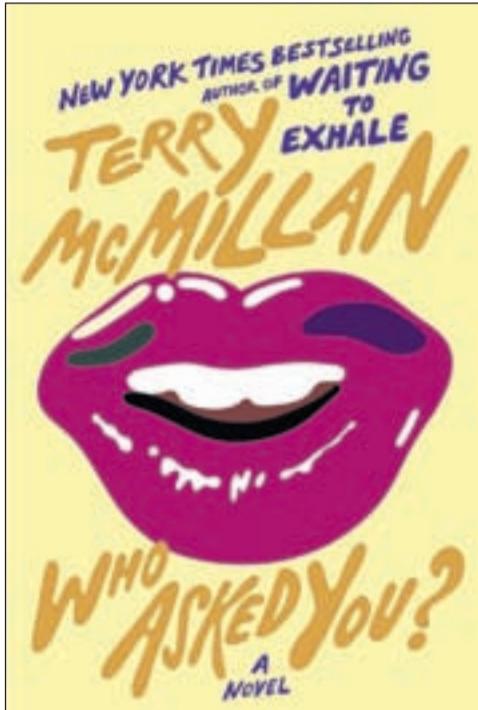
But that's exactly where NASA found an ingredient of plastic — the first time the chemical has been de-

tected on another world. The Cassini spacecraft found small amounts of propylene, a chemical used to make storage containers and other products, in the atmosphere of Saturn's largest moon Titan. Titan is among the few bodies in the solar system with a significant atmosphere made up of hydrocarbons.

Cassini previously detected signs that propylene might be present in Titan's hazy atmosphere. But scientists weren't convinced until one of the spacecraft's instruments measured the heat coming from Saturn and its moons, and identified the chemical.

The finding appears Monday in the Astrophysical Journal Letters. □

Terry McMillan does it again with new novel



This book cover image released by Viking shows "Who Asked You," by Terry McMillan. Associated Press

KIM CURTIS

Associated Press

Terry McMillan treads familiar territory in her latest novel, "Who Asked You?" Four sisters and their families struggle through life, love and real-world crises. Once again, the author of "Waiting to Exhale" and "How Stella Got Her Groove Back" creates a memorable and realistic, if not entirely likable, cast of characters — featuring strong women who also are wives and mothers. They face contemporary problems — drug addiction, incarceration, Alzheimer's, homosexuality — in imperfect ways. And that's what makes their stories so realistic and their personalities so empathetic. At nearly 400 pages, "Who Asked You?" is a breeze to read despite the heavy themes. The sisters and their families become neighbors, almost friends, to readers, and it's hard to let them go as the book nears its conclusion. As usual, McMillan's dialogue is spot on, and her understanding of pop culture infuses her story with unparalleled realism. McMillan does nothing new here, but why should she? Her books tell richly textured, insightful and funny family stories. It's what she does best. □

Channeling Andy Warhol for Sirius series

DAVID BAUDER

AP Entertainment Writer
NEW YORK (AP) — Wind up Robin Williams and the stories pour out — how he developed his accent for "Mrs. Doubtfire," found out "Mork & Mindy" was canceled by reading about it in a newspaper and the remark that abruptly ended his appearance on a German talk show.

Old friend Whoopi Goldberg steered the conversation last week at SiriusXM, part of a town hall program that's swiftly becoming a programming signature at the Internet radio service. Sirius' town halls bring artists together, usually when they have new projects to promote, with a small group of fans for hour-long discussions sent out to the Internet radio system's 25 million subscribers. Portions are fed out to a larger audience through Sirius' YouTube channel.

The series began by chance two years ago when Bruce Springsteen was touting his "Darkness on the Edge of Town" reissue. Sirius subscribers were brought in to meet their hero and asked about what Springsteen would

'Breaking Bad' logs record 10.3 million viewers

NEW YORK (AP) — AMC says Sunday's "Breaking Bad" finale seized a record-breaking number of viewers for the series.

The concluding episode was seen by 10.3 million viewers. That was three times the audience for the midseason finale airing a year ago.

The network says an expanded one-hour version of its "Talking Bad" discussion after-show delivered 4.4 million viewers.

The drama's popularity has soared during its five-season run, while it reaped acclaim and awards.

At last week's Emmy Awards it collected a best-drama-series trophy and a supporting-actress statu-



This image released by AMC shows Robert Forster, left, and Bryan Cranston in a scene from "Breaking Bad," which aired on Sunday, Sept. 22.

Associated Press

ette for Anna Gunn, who played the wife of teacher-turned-drug-lord Walter White opposite series star Bryan Cranston.

The series' previous record was set last Sunday, when 6.6 million viewers tuned in at the same time as the Emmys. □



This Sept. 25, 2013 photo released by SiriusXM radio shows Robin Williams, left, and moderator Whoopi Goldberg during the Entertainment Weekly Radio town hall in New York. The town hall series are becoming a programming signature at Sirius XM.

Associated Press

want his children to know about the 1978 disc and how his writing was affected by the death of Elvis Presley, the latter question leading the singer to pick up his guitar to demonstrate.

There have since been more than 70 such encounters with artists and personalities.

"We could have one every day if we wanted," said Scott Greenstein, SiriusXM president and chief content officer. "But we want the bar to remain fairly high."

Sirius is influenced by Andy Warhol's old Interview magazine in an effort to occasionally match interview subjects with other personalities. Burt Bacharach was interviewed by occasional songwriting partner Elvis Costello, Tony Bennett by Alec Baldwin, Mel Brooks by Judd Apatow and Ringo Starr by Russell Brand.

Williams had an easy familiarity with Goldberg, who sometimes needed to do little more than name the title of a movie to get Williams going.

"It's so immediate and honest," said David Steinberg, Williams' manager. "When you get people together who like each other, they're not guarded in what they talk about. It just flows."

Steinberg, who also brought client Billy Crystal in for a town hall, watched from a control room adjacent to the glass-enclosed "fishbowl" where Williams and Goldberg sat before about a dozen Sirius subscribers. (For the record, it was a Holocaust-inspired comment 30 years ago that didn't go over well at the German talk show.)

Williams appeared to enjoy the interaction, even as he told of one episode where his maniacally energetic comedy worked against him. He was in a Minneapolis airport one time when a fan came up to him with a two-word command: "Be zany."

"It's like walking up to Baryshnikov and saying, 'Dance, little Russian boy,'" he said. "It's like, Lincoln freed the slaves."

Williams said when the Sirius session was done that it wasn't as raucous as he had anticipated. □

Oscar-winning filmmaker backs out of Clinton doc

DAVID BAUDER

AP Television Writer

NEW YORK (AP)—CNN and NBC on Monday backed out of high-profile television projects about Hillary Rodham Clinton they had been working on for months.

NBC said it was pulling the plug on a planned four-hour miniseries on the Democratic former first lady and secretary of state. "Hillary," which was to star Diane Lane in the feature role and appear before the 2016 election, was the target of external protests and internal unhappiness at NBC.

Earlier Monday, an Academy Award-winning filmmaker who was making a documentary about Clinton for CNN said that he was backing out because few people would cooperate with him. The network said the film would not be produced.

The Republican National Committee had protested both projects, fearing they would lionize Clinton when she might be a candidate for president.

The RNC said it would not allow either network to air televised debates among potential Republican candidates for president for

2016 if the films continued. NBC Entertainment issued a statement saying that "after reviewing and prioritizing our slate of movie and miniseries development, we've decided that we will no longer continue developing the Hillary Clinton miniseries." The statement gave no reason for the change, and spokesman Richard Licata did not immediately return a call seeking comment.

The announcement by NBC's entertainment division this summer that it was making "Hillary" took people in the network's news division by surprise. They were concerned that the news division would be blamed if the entertainment series took liberties with facts or leaned too far in making a positive or a negative portrayal of Clinton.

NBC News Washington correspondents Chuck Todd and Andrea Mitchell made their unease about the miniseries public.

CNN, meanwhile, had contracted with Charles Ferguson to make a documentary on Clinton. Ferguson won the 2011 Academy Award for his documentary "Inside Job," about the 2008 finan-



In this Sept. 9, 2013, file photo, former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton speaks about Syria in the South Court Auditorium on the White House Complex in Washington.

Associated Press

cial meltdown.

But Ferguson wrote in a column posted on The Huffington Post on Monday that he concluded he couldn't make much of a film: Clinton wouldn't agree to be interviewed, and of the more than 100 people he approached only two who had dealt with her agreed to speak on camera.

Ferguson said nobody was interested in helping him

make the film.

"Not Republicans, not Democrats—and certainly nobody who works with the Clintons, wants access to the Clintons or dreams of a position in a Hillary Clinton administration," he said.

CNN understood and respected Ferguson's decision, CNN spokeswoman Barbara Levin said Monday.

Ferguson, through his manager's office, declined an interview request. But he wrote:

"It's a victory for the Clintons, and for the money

machines that both political parties have now become."

But I don't think that it's a victory for the media, or the American people. I still believe that Mrs. Clinton has many virtues including great intelligence, fortitude and a deep commitment to bettering the lives of women and children worldwide. But this is not her finest hour."

Clinton spokesman Nick Merrill, asked for a comment on Ferguson's decision, said, "Lights, camera, no reaction." □

Nickelodeon gets into radio with Clear Channel

NEW YORK (AP)—Nickelodeon is getting into the radio business.

The children's entertainment network has joined forces with Clear Channel Media and Entertainment to create its own station on Clear Channel's online iHeartRadio.

Nick Radio launched Monday with "The Way" singer Ariana Grande - also star of Nick's "Sam & Cat" - as featured guest DJ, along with another Nickelodeon act, Big Time Rush.

With its entry into radio, Nick Radio will provide some competition for



This Sept. 3, 2013 file photo shows singer Ariana Grande performing on NBC's "Today" show in New York.

Associated Press

Radio Disney, Disney's terrestrial and Internet radio stations. Like Radio Disney, Nick Radio will feature kid-friendly Top 40 music, stars from its network and celebrity interviews.

Besides iHeartRadio, it will also be on Nickelodeon's own website. □

NPR commentator Dan Zevin wins Thurber humor prize

NEW YORK (AP)—The judges have made it official: Essayist and NPR commentator Dan Zevin is funny. Zevin has been declared the winner of the Thurber Prize for American Humor. He received the \$5,000 award on Monday for his parenting book "Dan Gets a Mini-Van: Life at the Intersection of Dude and Dad."

The other finalists were Shalom Auslander's "Hope, a Tragedy" and a collaboration between Dave Barry and Alan Zweibel called "Lunatics."

The prize was founded in 1996 and is named for the late author and illustrator James Thurber, who was known for the short stories and cartoons he contributed to The New Yorker magazine. Previous winners include David Sedaris, Christopher Buckley and Calvin Trillin. □

Congress Cracks Up



GAIL COLLINS
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Our challenge today is to explain how Congress evolved into our national nutcase.

I am thinking mainly of the House Republicans. Back in the good old days, last week, these were the guys who said they would vote to raise the debt ceiling only if Obamacare was axed and the Keystone XL pipeline was built. Ah, last week. Giants strode the earth last week. Last week our nation was governed by men and women who were, as a matter of principle, willing to pay the nation's creditors when the bills were due just as long as the president canceled his central domestic initiative and oil shippers got a new pipe.

But that was then. This week the House Republican leaders were looking at a long, long list of must-haves that also included changes in regulations relating to coal ash, reduction in civil service pensions, restrictions on malpractice suits and an end to some greenhouse gas regulations. And their members found that list too restrictive. Behind-the-scenes discussion continued about more things the Republicans could demand. A ban on late-term abortions? A trillion-dollar budget cut? Bring back the gold standard? Bring back the bustle? It's 2013 and anything is possible. So, what do you think is wrong with these people? Thanks to gerrymandered congressional districts and the Tea Party, we do seem to have a surprising number of elected officials who actually don't believe that raising the debt limit so the government can pay its bills is a good plan. ("All that does is just say: 'Well, you've got a little bit more credit - keep spending,'" Rep. Walter Jones of North Carolina once told a radio interviewer.) But there's got to be more to it than that. Let's try to think of three other reasons the U.S. Congress continues to behave as if it's playing the Jack Nicholson part in "The Shining." I'll go first.

1. The Republicans are desperately, obsessively demonizing Obamacare to cover up the fact that they don't want to do anything to Medicare or Social Security. Those used to be the party's obsession - remember privatizing Social Security? But that was before they noticed that the entire Republican base is on Social Security.

Ranting about Obamacare,

which one New Hampshire politician recently compared to the Fugitive Slave Act, is an excellent way to give the impression that you're fighting to reduce entitlements without having to do anything about the actual entitlements.

2. It's all about Twitter. Social media have transformed Congress' younger generation. (While much of the Senate is arguably too old to know how to use the TV remote, three of the four leaders of this week's faux filibuster are 42.) Twitter in particular makes politicians even more self-obsessed than they used to be. "Talking about tomorrow's #DefundObamacare vote tonight on Hannity. Be sure to tune in!" twitted Sen. Ted Cruz on Thursday. Cruz kept demanding that the Senate "listen to the American people," but he really meant that they should listen to his Twitter followers. A politician riding on a wave of tweets feels as if the nation is cheering his every word, even when the nation is actually reading the sports page while a select splinter of hard-core supporters manically pound away on their smartphones. A hundred thousand people cheering you on in the social media feels like a mass movement. But this is a gigantic country. You can find 100,000 people who believe in a secret plot by Belgium to corner the market on beetroot.

Richard Baker, the co-author of "The American Senate," says the late Sen. Robert Byrd waged a war against cellphones on the Senate floor: "When he entered the room, there was this whooshing under the desks." But Byrd is gone, and now we have Ted Cruz. 3. Zombie apocalypse. Only possible explanation.

On Friday, the Senate finally managed to vote to keep the government running until mid-November, when we'd get to do this all over again. It's now up to the House, which will be having an unusual working weekend while the Republicans decide whether to pass the Senate bill and move on, or festoon it with anti-Obamacare amendments. The majority whip, Kevin McCarthy, suggested that his colleagues might want to join him for an evening showing of the movie "Prisoners." One Republican aide worried that the media might read too much into the title, what with the country being held hostage to the House's current psychosis and all. The media are actually disappointed that McCarthy passed up "Insidious" and "Despicable Me."

Cynics would say that keeping the government going for a few more weeks is just the kind of modest, uncontroversial proposal that automatically vanishes into the black hole that is the current House of Representatives. But maybe there's hope. After all, on Friday the House members did show they could pass legislation in a purposeful, bipartisan fashion. They approved a bill naming a building in Virginia after a deceased federal worker. □



The Captain Ahabs Of The House



CHARLES M. BLOW
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many more rounds of this must America take?

How many more times must the economic neck of the nation have a knife pressed against it by Republicans demanding a ransom?

It seems the answer is at least once more - or twice.

Washington is still wrangling over a way to avoid a government shutdown next week, while Republicans are already gearing up to refuse to raise the debt limit - something that no Congress under any other president has ever refused to do.

But those presidents were not President Barack Obama, the bane of the far right's existence, and those Congresses were not as infested with members who saw disruption as part of their duty.

As long as Obama is president, these folks will be flush with fever. Opposition to Obama is their *raison d'être*. America's national interests are subordinate to their selfish ones.

The far right needs Obama to fail in order to fulfill their most preposterous prophecies. Obama must deal with a Republican-controlled House of Representatives that wants

nothing more than his demise. There is nothing between the House and the president but a table of cease-fire and surrender at which no one will sit.

The House Republican caucus is full of Captain Ahabs, and Obama is their Moby Dick.

The president has already said he will not "negotiate on anything when it comes to the full faith and credit of the United States of America."

While Speaker John Boehner, having proved unable to lead the extreme elements of his caucus, has vowed to "continue to do everything we can to repeal the president's failed health care law."

Set aside the fact that the law cannot yet be deemed a failure because its provisions are still being phased in and those that have gone into effect seem to be working.

Focus instead on the fundamental disagreement here: The president is saying that he won't negotiate over a stunt that would destroy our economy and the world's, while Republicans are saying they are willing to risk it all in order to derail him. This is not responsible. This is not principled. This is not high-minded. This is personal and dangerous. This is an abuse of instruments of power in pursuit of reprisal.

The subtext to this struggle is most disturbing: Is the drive to destroy the legacy of one president worth endangering the health of a nation? Can a by-any-means strategy be justified when it could cause a by-all-measures disaster?

Individual Republican members of the House - many in safe districts full of constituents who detest this president as much as they do - seem to have answered those questions in the affirmative.

And the House Republican cau-

cus as a whole is banking on the public's minimal understanding of budgetary minutiae to shield members from the blame for pushing us once more to the brink and possibly over it.

First, let's understand something: National debt is not the same as household debt or credit card debt.

Being in debt and having that debt rise and paying down that debt has been a normal part of government in Western countries for centuries.

The United States has been in debt every year except one. Debt under Obama is not new. And raising the debt ceiling is not about granting permission to spend more money; it's about borrowing to service the debt that the country has already incurred.

Congress has always raised the debt ceiling. Not doing so now would be catastrophic.

But that concept is sometimes hard for people to grasp. Around the last time the Republicans held the economy hostage over the raising of the debt ceiling, in 2011, the Pew Research Center found that only 18 percent of Americans said they understood very well the implications of not raising the limit, while 32 percent said they understood it fairly well and 47 percent said they did not have a good understanding of what it would mean.

So, with that in mind, it is no wonder recent polls have found that most Americans favor tying spending cuts to the raising of the debt limit, and more prefer not raising it - even if it leads to the country's defaulting - to raising it without conditions.

Congressional Republicans are banking on that confusion. They just might use Americans' concerns about the economy to destroy the economy. Only in America. □

Every Tuesday Night from 8pm to 10pm:

Steel Pan Night at Palm Beach Plaza Mall



PALM BEACH - Nico Connor, a second generation steel pan recording artist who is one of the 2 performing

sons of the late Edgar Connor, Aruba steel pan pioneer who obviously shared his talent with his sons. Nico

has been surrounded by (steel pan) music and was in love with the sound from a young age, his mother

Gloria Connor the great arranger of the famous invaders steel band gave him a saxophone that's still at his side but his steel pans

and performing.

As a steel pan performer/label owner he's always looking for the next step to add to his virtuosity groovy sounds, and expand his musical journey beyond the horizon. The all-star band will be performing at Palm Beach Plaza Mall every Tuesday

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